

## Signs of a Shift: Recreation Services

While soccer becomes more popular than other more traditional sports and yoga and tai chi push aside aerobic classes, the same trends are true of changes within the overall approach to recreation services.

Community parks and recreation was originally designed as a public service that contributed to the overall wellbeing and quality of life of the entire community; a practice perfected by Newington Park and Recreation Department.

However, over time, circumstances changes, most significantly tax changes such as Proposition 13 in California, those changes launched a shift in the orientation and delivering of parks and recreation services. Newington was no stranger to this shift as more and more funding for programs and services became dependent upon fees and charges.

The end of the last century and the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has created a return to center creating a balance between the public service mission of public parks and recreation and the revenue generation focus of its programs and services.

<i>From end of 20<sup>th</sup> century</i>	<i>To beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century</i>
Marketing Orientation to Programming	Public Service Orientation to Services with Appropriate Fees and Charges
Focus on Individual Participation	Focus on Community Outcomes

## Recreation Programming

The department offers a year-round, comprehensive recreation program that follows a somewhat traditional approach to offerings.

Observation of the overall programming efforts by this department include the following:

### Orientation and Approach

Use of a “marketing orientation” to programming which reflects the focus upon generating revenue or covering costs as a primary goal and offering activities and programs on that basis

Staff program assignments based upon individual staff preference

Programming is envisioned as one season as a time rather than use of a long range mission and plan

### Program Areas and Forms

- Extensive use of class and team forms of programming
- Class outcomes primarily instructor designed and directed
- Reliance upon outside groups to provide youth sports
- Youth sports primarily directed towards team sports offered in a competitive format

### Population Groups

- Playground and summer camps serve as a substitute for safe places for unsupervised children in the summer; an important service for families
- Some groups of people are under-represented: adolescents, mature adults, various disability groups

### Specific Comments

- Winter Programming is limited in scope
- Arts, music, drama offerings are particularly strong for a community of this size
- Fees assigned to various programs seem to lack an easily recognizable rationale

## **Marketing: Observations**

### **Definitions and Differentiations**

It is important at this juncture to both define marketing and differentiate it from “marketing orientation” to programming and sales. The definition of marketing, as released by the American Marketing Association, is:

...“an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.”

This involves doing market research on customers, analyzing their needs, and then making strategic decisions about product design, pricing, promotion and distribution. Sales is only a sub-set of one of the many processes.

The “marketing orientation” to programming reflects a park and recreation department’s efforts to attract individual consumers to programs and services for the purposes of both providing a service and generating revenue.

### **Observations**

Based upon a review of the marketing activities of the department, the following were observed:

- The seasonal brochure is well done and distributed widely throughout the community
- The Superintendent has assumed a public relations and community outreach approach to interacting with the community and communicating with the press.
- While the department is meeting the traditional marketing needs for parks and recreation, they have not undertaken a comprehensive approach
- The website and cable TV opportunities are underutilized

## **Public Input**

The planning process for the strategic master plan attempted to provide ample opportunity for residents to submit their issues, concerns, and interests. A variety of meetings and interviews were held with Town staff, including most of the department heads and staff in departments that interacted regularly with the Parks and Recreation Department. Park and recreation directors from nearby communities were also interviewed. Others specifically contacted include the School District leadership and the Town Council. Discussions were also held with Park and Recreation Department staff.

In addition to the interviews and small group meetings above the consultants and staff conducted one public meeting open to all and several neighborhood “socials” designed to obtain feedback on the residents perspective on the nearby parks as well as the whole park system.

The following materials represent the findings of each of the public input sessions.

### **Sports Council Focus Group**

#### **Attendance**

- Soccer Club of Newington
- Newington Swim Club
- Newington Youth Lacrosse
- Newington Midget Football and Cheer
- Newington Little League
- Newington Boys travel Basketball

### **Concerns about Existing Facilities**

1. Safety is a major issue;
  - Little League has upgraded their safety standards and some of the Newington fields do not meet the new code. Little League representatives will submit a copy of the new safety code to the Newington Park and Recreation Office.
  - Drainage patterns are an issue with runoff accumulating in the base paths and around the infield/outfield lip.
  - Mowing frequency is a problem due to rain and the tendency for fields to remain wet.
  - Clay soils retain water.
2. Vandalism on fields
3. Fields are open all year get lots of unauthorized use, i.e., sledding, football in the snow, etc.
4. Reaching the point where new field demands exceed the number of fields. Especially true for lacrosse the newest sport.
5. Need more coordination between park grounds and the high school staff. Who has priority for fields if a permit is issued
6. The deck at the HS pool is palling

7. High School Pool pumps erratically, pumps too much or too little chlorine and is too cold for some users
8. Swim Club under the impression that City covered insurance and found that none existed.

### **New Ideas**

9. In the past sport's leagues had a contract with the Parks and Recreation Department that detailed the field use and conditions for the season. The Department should consider returning to that process.
10. Look into the feasibility of installing a synthetic turf field
11. School fields are underutilized and need better management of availability and scheduling
12. Swim Club has 1 and 1/2 hour of pool time 4 days a week. Needs one more day for parity with other swim clubs.
13. Wrestling club needs a permanent space.
14. More field space is possible through reconfiguring the existing fields. Sites to be considered include:  
Chaffee School  
Immanuel  
Sr. Center  
Elizabeth Green  
Seymour
15. Badger Field needs improvements
16. Park and Recreation website needs the flexibility to link with sports group websites.
17. Skate Park use and patterns of entry and exit at Clem Lemire Park need to be addressed with traffic calming and parking to keep people off the grass.

### **Responses to distributed notes of the meeting**

#### **Response 1**

Some of the concerns have good detail supporting the concern. However, the new idea listing does not have sufficient detail supporting the idea. For ex. #17 - The skate park recommendation for new access does not include the seriousness of the situation where children are crossing Balducci Way while vehicles speed up and down the road to get to and from the skate park and that the concern has been brought to the Town's attention with little or no response. #14 - The idea for using the schools could include supporting information that the idea could be accomplished with relatively little costs. Some of the sports are overlapping at the facilities at times with an elevated risk for injury due to the conflicts. The overuse on the fields will lead to the facility being unavailable for future play.

Please consider the suggestion to provide additional detail to the audience to support the new ideas.  
Thank you.

#### **Response 2**

I just wanted to add one thing to the attached notes. You mentioned better coordination in a couple of items. I think we had discussed, better communication among all of the different sports, the high school and the park and recreation department. I think we all felt that this was a major factor to many of the issues that we run in too.

## **Public Input Session: Wednesday, April 10, 2006**

### **Newington Town Hall, 7 p.m.**

The purpose of this first public input session was to listen to the suggestions and insights provided by interested members of the community related to the role and potential parks and recreation plays within the life of the community as well as specific suggestions for consideration. People attending were invited to respond to the following:

- Attributes and Qualities that make Newington a Quality Place to Live
- Issues and/or Challenges facing Newington in the future
- Individual Preferences or Concerns related to Parks and Recreation

### **Synopsis of Information**

Using a nominal group process that allows all in attendance to add their comments and suggestions followed by a consolidation of those individual comments resulted in the following:

#### Attributes and Qualities:

Newington is a good place to live due to: its desirable location, the quality of its services, and the people residing within the community.

There was consensus that among the 3 strongest attributes and qualities that made Newington a good place to live is its desirable location, the quality of services afforded residents, and the people residing within the community. While desirable location represents a pre-existing asset of the community, those in attendance were especially cognizant of the quality of and wide range of services provided for residents in Newington as well as the unique sense of community and friendliness of their fellow residents.

#### Issues and Challenges:

Those in attendance identified as broad issues and challenges: physical resources, both natural and manmade; financial resources, and changing needs of people.

The concern for physical resources within Newington fell within 3 different areas: the need to acquire and preserve open space; the need to update or replace aging infrastructure, schools and other public buildings; and the desire to make the community a more walkable and biking friendly place.

Financial resources were clearly an issue identified by those in attendance citing the need to maintain reasonable tax rates and/or expanding existing grand list as it related to maintaining the variety and quality of services within the community.

The changing needs of people incorporated two different areas; one the issue of accessibility and inclusion and changing social patterns leading to reduced dependence upon volunteer assistance.

### **Preferences and/or Concerns**

The individuals in attendance had a number of specific suggestions, preferences, and concerns related to the provision of park and recreation services in Newington. The three categories within these preferences and concerns were protecting environment and open spaces, maintaining existing areas, facilities, and programs; and need for improved trails and walking opportunities.

- Attendees expressed a genuine concern for protecting the natural environment and green spaces within Newington
- Shared concerns and agreement related to maintaining the quality of current programs, services, and facilities.
- The desire for expansion of a trails system as well as additions and/or improvements to sidewalks to enhancing the walkability opportunities within the community.

### **Specific Comments and Consolidation Categories**

#### **Attributes and Qualities Making Newington a Good Place to Live**

1. Excellent school system
2. Good people
3. Location
4. Great services
5. Parks and recreation, especially boundless playground
6. Safety
7. Well established infrastructure
8. Cohesiveness of the community
9. Close to everything; don't need to travel far
10. Low taxes
11. Size of town
12. Library
13. Highway access
14. Berlin turnpike
15. Comfortable town, not pretentious
16. Variety of services
17. Life long friends
18. Increasing diversity
19. Human services

#### **Overall Attributes Consolidated** (with corresponding numbered attributes)

- A. Desirable Location: 3, 9, 11, 13, 14
- B. Quality of Services: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 16, 19
- C. People: 2, 8, 15, 17, 18

### **Issues and/or Challenges Facing Newington**

1. Schools and public facilities are aging, except police station
2. Limited open space
3. Nearly unbearable tax burden
4. Traffic and rush hour times
5. Walkability and biking safety
6. Aging population
7. Limited resources for services
8. Need to increase tax base, i.e. Commercial, industrial, etc.
9. Overview use of existing fields and no new fields
10. Challenges facing non-profits
11. Grow the grand list
12. Classroom sizes too high
13. Sustain quality of existing open space
14. Enhance the downtown; places to walk to
15. Fewer volunteers; changes in social patterns
16. Health of kids and everybody
17. Lack for inclusionary programs
18. Lack of bike trails

### **Overall Issues Consolidated (with corresponding numbered issues)**

- A. Physical Resources (natural and manmade): 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 18
- B. Financial Resources: 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11,
- C. People: 6, 15, 16, 17

### **Listing of Individual Preferences and Concerns**

1. Educational farm
2. Athletic opportunities for average kids (rec vs. Travel)
3. Indoor sports facilities with multiple fields
4. Greenway system that connects with other trails
5. System of regulations discouraging vehicle, parking, and encouraging trails, walking, etc.
6. Provide money to sustain existing resources
7. Trails along the bus right of way
8. Livability issues, families, housing, childcare, affordability
9. Filling of land fills
10. Restore community activities such as theater to original levels of functioning
11. Continuation of children's theaters and similar activities
12. Preserve Cedar Mountain
13. Maintain parks and recreation, pay as you go
14. More public garden spaces
15. Safe indoor facilities for young children
16. Ombudsman position for minimally developed lands
17. Fix pools
18. Discourage cutting of trees
19. Make use of community service by scouts, etc. For projects
20. Volunteer coordinator for community efforts
21. Better sidewalks

Overall Preferences Consolidated (with corresponding numbered suggestions)

- A. Environmental/Open Space (1, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18)
- B. Maintain Existing Resources (6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20)
- C. Trails and Walkability (4, 5, 7, 21)

Additional Suggestions received via email to be added to public input:

## Comment 1

Recently I wandered down to Beacon Park via Nicholson St and when I got to the entrance of the park, I was greeted by a large concrete block. As I use a wheelchair I found it next to impossible to enter the park. I would like to be able to use the park and have access to it from any one or all of the entry points without issues such as this. Could these barriers be moved to accommodate my wheelchair? I think I need about 30-36 inches without having to go through the dirt which would likely be mud at many times. I do understand you are trying to deter drivers from going through there but as I said it is also hindering wheelchair access, and I would like to enjoy my neighborhood park.

**Ice Cream Socials for Neighborhood Insights**

**Tuesday, July 18, 2006: Beechwood Park**

**Wednesday, July 19, 2006: Beacon Park**

**Thursday, July 20, 2006: Little Brook Park**

**Saturday, July 22, 2006: Seymour Park (cancelled due to inclement weather)**

The purpose of these ice cream socials was to provide an opportunity for people living in proximity to neighborhood parks to express their preferences for specific neighborhood parks as well as distribute surveys soliciting information about parks and recreation in Newington overall.

Each neighborhood event began at 6 p.m. with ice cream donated for the purpose of the social. Attendees were afforded the opportunity to complete the general survey as well as provide insight and preferences for individual neighborhood parks either on a easel board or more privately on index cards or a combination of both.

The following reflects the various insights shared by attendees:

**Tuesday, July 18, 2006: Beechwood Park (neighbors in the Starr and Eagle Park areas were also invited)**

Attendance: Approximately, 70 people attended this meeting ranging from older adults who had lived in the area for 40+ years to a sizable number of new young families with children from infants to ten and eleven year olds. All attendees were very positive about providing space and activities for children to play.

- There was a general consensus of those in attendance that Beechwood Park as well as the other two parks, Starr and Eagle had been neglected and were in need of refurbishment and then ongoing maintenance and attention.
- Those present indicated that various neighbors often mowed along the brook and filled the wet areas of the park with mulch.



- Several attendees mentioned that they would be willing to assist the Department with filling holes, spreading mulch, etc.
- Among the specific requests for Beechwood Park were: bigger playground with tot friendly amenities, i.e. rubber surfaces; picnic tables, clean pond, return of ice skating, swing sets for older children
- Among the specific requests for Eagle Parks were: equipment for older children, benches, drinking fountain, neighborhood block parties, weeding, and dog park

**Wednesday, July 19, 2006: Beacon Park**

Attendance: Approximately 40 people attended with most families living in the area from 30 to 40 years and in a number of instances, long time families brought adult children with them to share their recollections of their growing-up years in the park.

- Once again, there was general consensus of those in attendance that Beacon Park has been neglected over the years and a strong preference for restoring it to its former state
- There was more concern expressed in this area regarding perception of safety with overgrown trees, etc. and the access of vehicles into the park for late night gatherings
- Amenity requests included: benches, flowers, picnic tables, drinking fountain, and fish pond
- Basic necessities requested: lighting, garbage cans, removal of dead trees, mosquito control, and fence at entrance of park
- Restoration suggestions included: repair of basketball court and return of playground equipment

**Thursday, July 20, 2006: Little Brook Park (neighbors from Candlewyck Park were also invited)**

Attendees: Approximately 90 people attended this event with a few more long-time residents and a large number of young families

- One of the biggest concerns by the residents in this area was understandably their inability and the inability of their children to cross the Berlin Turnpike safely and access the programs and activities of the larger community.
- Due to the fact that this park is relatively new, the comments were quite different and included such factors as lights, porta-pottys, fenced areas for dogs, and picnic tables.
- Other suggestions included: holding small recreation programs in the neighborhood, monthly socials, and keeping the park dog friendly
- This group was much more forthcoming about parks and recreation in general and some of the suggestions that appeared repeatedly included: lap lanes for adults, swimming access in winter, bike trails, walking trails, etc.

**Recurring Comment:** One theme that found itself throughout these socials was the lack of ongoing maintenance by the park department for both the parks and most especially for the cul de sac areas

**Additional Public Input****Comment 1.**Little Brook Park

First, I would like to thank you for taking the time to talk to me regarding the Little Brook park and agreeing to replace the baby swing set as soon as you reasonably can.

Secondly, I would like to give you some of the thoughts/recommendations I have received from neighbors for the Little Brook park.

I have been told that the playgrounds in Landmark and Cambridge apartments have been removed and will not be replaced, therefore those people are utilizing the Little Brook park more. Meaning Little Brook park is getting more usage which is great. With that said the neighborhood would like to see the park equipment replaced/kept updated to safety codes. There are a lot of families with young children that use, or will be using the park within the next few months. I myself have four children and use it almost everyday weather permitting.

If the park on Lamplighter is not being utilized, if Little Brook park might be able to utilize any of that equipment were deemed appropriate.

The issue with vandalism at Little Brook park, how about adding a light/motion light to discourage teenagers from "hanging out" there.

Adding a bench or two so grown ups have a place to sit while their children are using the park.

Getting rid of the brush, poison ivy, weeds that grow along the fence line on the right hand side of the park.

**Comment 2.**Plantings at Mill Pond Park Playscape

It was good talking to you today. I've enclosed some photos of the area where we would like to see a windbreak/sound barrier installed. Something like a hedge row or an arbor vitae screen might be nice. This would certainly help cut down on the noise from the playscape, which as you know has increased over the years with the playscape's popularity and with the removal of many mature trees due to disease and to make space for the now neglected garden.

In the first photo the idea I have is to install shrubs from the edge of the garden fence along the edge of the playscape to the blue handicapped sitting area. The second photo shows a view of this area from the playscape. I also noticed last night that the newly installed motion detection lights are pretty bright, and I think in the winter when the one maple

in this area has lost its leaves the light may be somewhat of a nuisance as it will be shining directly into the back of our house. This is probably exacerbated by the removal of all the diseased trees in the southern/southwestern part of the playscape earlier this spring.

Overall I think you know our position on trees/greenery in the park. There are many areas that have needed planting for some time to increase shade and to increase the "park" feel of the area but the thing I struggle with is that the town has removed many, many mature trees over the past couple of years for various reasons but the replacement plantings are slow to arrive (if at all). For example, what is the plan to replace all the diseased trees that were recently removed from the playscape? As I pointed out the removal of these has a direct affect on the noise/light that my neighbors and I have to deal with but also on the amount of available shade in the playscape. I sincerely hope the town will begin replacing some of these trees as soon as possible, and consider additional landscaping throughout Mill Pond Park.

### **Comment 3**

#### Mary Wells Park

I live on Cedar Street and walk past the Mary Wells park frequently. Lately there has been a tremendous amount of trash left at the basketball courts by the young men who play ball. Many times my daughter and I will pick up the water bottles, Gatorade bottles, empty cig packs, candy, etc. because it looks horrible from the street. I can ALMOST understand one or two empty bottles, but they are leaving 25+ bottles and items of garbage. This is a total disregard for our town and parks. A garbage can is 25 feet away. Can this park be monitored for this activity and also have the trash collected by town workers. These young men should not be allowed to use the courts if they cannot take care of it.

### **Public Interest Survey**

The consultants issued a one-page survey in June and July of 2006. The survey was included in the back of the program publication, posted on the Town web-site, available at the library and other public gathering places and was distributed at the High School to selected classes. There were a total of 297 surveys returned. Most of these came from the High School so the results have a bit bias toward the youth. This was not intended as a random sample statistically valid survey. On the next page is the survey form that was distributed. Some of the highlights of the survey results are presented in the following pages.

### Remembering the Past, Planning the Future .... Parks' 50th Anniversary

What better way to celebrate Newington Parks and Recreation's 50th Anniversary than planning for future needs. Your ideas and suggestions are important to shaping that future. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to share your thoughts.



Please check up to five (5) recreation/parks/open space opportunities that you would like to see increased over the next 15 years:

<input type="checkbox"/> Archery	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacrosse	<input type="checkbox"/> Running	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Fitness/Aerobics
<input type="checkbox"/> Baseball	<input type="checkbox"/> Soccer	<input type="checkbox"/> Skate Boarding	<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Study	<input type="checkbox"/> Music/Poetry Events
<input type="checkbox"/> Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/> Softball	<input type="checkbox"/> In-Line Skating	<input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Coed Sports
<input type="checkbox"/> Football	<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming	<input type="checkbox"/> BMX Cycling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Pet Programs
<input type="checkbox"/> Golf	<input type="checkbox"/> Tennis	<input type="checkbox"/> X-Country Ski	<input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/> Bus Trips/Tours
<input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics	<input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball	<input type="checkbox"/> Bird Watching	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Camp
<input type="checkbox"/> Hockey	<input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling	<input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> Walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Crafts
<input type="checkbox"/> Ice Skating	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/> Aquacise	<input type="checkbox"/> Playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Frisbee Golf

- Describe any groups of people in town you believe are currently underserved? \_\_\_\_\_
- What program(s)/opportunities would you offer those groups? \_\_\_\_\_
- When thinking about Facilities within the Town, please check the appropriate box (es) to indicate areas you think might currently be inadequate.

☐ Athletic Fields   ☐ Town Parks   ☐ Natural Open Space   ☐ Neighborhood Parks   ☐ The mix is adequate

- Which of the above do you think will be the most important to address in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

What interests do you have where opportunities are not currently available?	What activities do you participate in now that you expect to continue over the next 10 years?	What other activities or interests do you expect to be important to you in the next 10 years?
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	3. _____

- Indicate your voting District and closest Public School

<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Dist. 8
<input type="checkbox"/> High School	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruth Chaffee	<input type="checkbox"/> Anna Reynolds	<input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Green	<input type="checkbox"/> John Wallace	<input type="checkbox"/> John Patterson	<input type="checkbox"/> Martin Kellogg	<input type="checkbox"/> John Wallace

Considering only the Newington Parks and Recreation facilities and activities complete the following.

Did you visit a Newington Town Park? Y N or Participate in a recreation activity? Y N in the last year? (Please circle)

List your favorite programs or activities of this last year?	List the parks you most often visited in the last year?	Rate the park facilities and maintenance at the parks you visit?
1. _____	1. _____	Excellent _____ Fair. _____
2. _____	2. _____	Good _____ Poor _____
3. _____	3. _____	No Opinion _____

Comments:

Visit [www.ci.newington.ct.us](http://www.ci.newington.ct.us) for scheduled meetings, progress reports and updates on how you can stay involved in the P & R Plan process. Please mail or drop off your comments by July 30, 2006 to:

Newington Parks and Recreation

131 Cedar Street

Newington, CT 06111

**Thank you again for your time and interest in helping to shape Newington's future.**

Question 1. Please check up to five (5) recreation/parks/open space opportunities that you would like to see increased over the next 15 years.

Activity	Tally	Percent
Basketball	69	23.3%
Football	64	21.6%
Lacrosse	58	19.6%
Archery	57	19.3%
Volleyball	56	18.9%
Soccer	47	15.9%
Golf	46	15.5%
Gymnastics	45	15.2%
Bus Trips/Tours	44	14.9%
Ice skating	42	14.2%
Music/Poetry Events	42	14.2%
Fishing	40	13.5%
Tennis	40	13.5%
Coed Sports	35	11.8%
Performing Arts	35	11.8%
Photography	34	11.5%
Swimming	34	11.5%
Frisbee Golf	33	11.1%
Canoeing/Boating	32	10.8%
Hockey	32	10.8%
Bicycling	30	10.1%
Fitness/Aerobics	29	9.8%
Bird Watching	28	9.5%
BMX cycling	28	9.5%
Playgrounds	28	9.5%
Picnicking	26	8.8%
Walking	26	8.8%
Running	24	8.1%
Pet Programs	23	7.8%
Skate Boarding	22	7.4%
X-Country Skiing	22	7.4%
In-Line skating	19	6.4%
Nature Study	19	6.4%
Wrestling	16	5.4%
Summer Camps	15	5.1%
Softball	14	4.7%
Visual arts	14	4.7%
Crafts	13	4.4%
Aquacize	8	2.7%

Given the bias toward youth there is a predictable focus on active sports and activities. The consultants find there to be an unusually high interest in non-traditional sports like archery and in the cultural arts activities such as photography, performing arts and music/poetry events.

Question 2. Describe any groups of people in town you believe are currently underserved?

Group	Tally
Teens	62
Senior Citizens	36
Children	11
Adults, kids seem to have many opportunities	8
Middle aged and elderly	3
Homeless people	2
Families	1
Little Brook all east side of turnpike	1
Low income families	1
Middle school	1
Mothers	1
Non drivers	1
Singles-Middle aged & older	1
Teen sports for fun	1
Those (youngsters especially) east of turnpike	1
Those interested in the arts	1
Young children	1

The youth saw themselves as being underserved, which could indicate that the service provided are not believed to be adequate to meet there needs. The other references to non-drivers, and youth east of the Turnpike are worth consideration despite having only a few comments.

Question 4. When thinking about Facilities within the Town, please check the appropriate box to indicate areas you think might currently be inadequate.

Question 4	Total
Athletic fields	105
Neighborhood Parks	102
Natural Open space	86
Town Parks	67
Mix is adequate	44

The consultants found the responses interesting because athletic fields received nearly the same amount of mentions as Neighborhood Parks.

Question 5. Which of the above do you think will be the most important to address in the future?

Question 5	Total
Athletic fields	62
Natural Open space	35
Neighborhood Parks	35
Town Parks	15

Despite the number of respondents that believed the neighborhood parks were inadequate, the greater number believed athletic fields to be the most important facility to address in the future.

Question 9. Indicate your voting District and closest Public School

District or School	Total
Dist 1 / High School	74
Dist 2 / Ruth Chaffee	35
Dist 3 / Anna Reynolds	15
Dist 4 / Elizabeth Green	42
Dist 5 / John Wallace	38
Dist 6 / John Patterson	28
Dist 7 / Martin Kellogg	14
Dist 8 / John Wallace	14

Of the 260 or so that responded to this question they seemed to live in or near the High School almost twice as often as those living in other sections of the Town.

Question 10. Did you visit a Newington Town Park?

Response	Total
No	15
Yes	129

Of those responding, 90% had visited a Newington park in the past year. The parks most often cited were Mill Pond and Churchill.

Question 11. Did you participate in a Newington sponsored recreation activity?

Response	Total
No	43
Yes	94

Almost 69% of the respondents participated in a Newington Recreation program. Sports were the most often mentioned activity.

Question 12. Rate the park facilities and maintenance at the parks you visit?

Response	Total
Excellent	14
Fair	58
Good	102
Poor	16
No Opinion	13

While the overall respondent perception of the parks is that they are in good or better condition they are heavily weighted to the lower half of the response choices..

Finally the survey gave respondents the opportunity to make any comment they chose. The following represent all of the comments.

Comments Received
At one time you had (2) aquacize programs. Evenings at Churchill and days at Mill Pond. Will these be considered in the future?
Beacon Park: Playground equipment; Could be used for soccer field for little kids although parking would probably become a problem; Park Benches and picnic tables; Possible dog park
Bridge by pond needs to be replaced--bathrooms cleaned more, garbage emptied more often
Grass gets long
I live across from Beechwood Park: it is one reason I purchased the house 9 years ago. The pond is now terrible; breeds mosquitoes-needs help!
I love programs-I work full time-sometimes are not offered in the evening for my 9 year old.
I would like Churchill Pool open at nights pm weekends - Mill Pond's is open
I would like to see a running area (fenced) for dogs at Young farm
I would like to see a safe passageway across the Berlin turnpike for bikers and pedestrians
Ice skating outside, x-country skiing
My daughter will not run at Seymour Park now due to older people walking dogs and leaving dog waste on track; they also told her "you are scaring my dog," while she attempted to run on the track.
Need to keep geese traffic limited in Churchill and Mill Pond
Open/clean toilet facilities year round would be lovely
Recreation activity too expensive, poor teaching staff, inexperienced
Sometimes I am afraid to bring my granddaughter to Beechwood. I never know what condition the park will be in. This park is within walking distance, which makes it nice. Better playground
We live near Seymour Park and do not go there because it is unsafe. We love Parks and Rec--our only wish would be for transportation in the summer.
We love park & rec. Keep up the good work
What happened to the fence @ Mill Pond? There is a section missing from memory garden
Would love to see an outdoor ice skating rink at Mill Pond Park as in North Conway, NH and (I believe) Windsor, CT - temporary rink, lights, possibly warming hut, and an occasional event with bonfire!



## **Special Issues Analysis**

The Analysis of Special Issues is a presentation and discussion of findings, key issues, and recommendations to address the park and recreation needs and desired outcomes as indicated by the residents and community leaders of Newington. It also contains recommendations regarding operational findings that vary from applicable best practices. All of these findings and recommendations reflect the Guiding Principles Established in the beginning of the planning process.

## **Findings, Discussion, Recommendations**

### **The Guiding Principles**

**Optimizing Resources:** It is critical in this era of finite resources to ensure that resources especially human and informational are organized to optimize effectiveness and efficiency.

**Maintaining Existing Resources:** Over time the department has taken on additional responsibilities while simultaneously dealing with finite or diminishing resources. These actions result in the need to address maintenance backlog and restoration of existing physical resources.

**Meeting the Needs of a Changing Community and Society:** Children grow, people age, and our neighborhoods and communities change incrementally but seemingly overnight creating the need to make program and service changes accordingly.

**Capacity for Excellence in Community Service:** Over the last 15 years, public and nonprofit organizations have increasingly been called upon to establish policies and practices that ensure equitable services; meet professional standards; and address issues of resource accountability.

### **Optimizing Resources:**

#### **Automation**

##### **Findings:**

Recreation Division staff spends an inordinate amount of time on program registration, facility reservations, budgeting and accounting for program costs and revenues. They have little time for comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the data to ensure cost-effective and viable program offerings.

In addition, the park maintenance function needs to complete an inventory that describes all physical assets in the parks that need to be maintained and their maintenance requirements. This information can be used to ensure that park resources are being maintained at a sustainable and cost-effective level. A maintenance management system can also capture workload, frequency of work activities and cost histories that will make the operation as cost-effective as possible, thereby increasing responsiveness to resident/ user group needs.

**Recommendations:**

**1. Procure recreation management software** configured to provide the capability to manage and account for program and class registration, point of sale operations, financial accounting, membership and customer services, and time and attendance reporting. All services should be compatible with the Town IT, Web and financial systems. Recreation Program Management Software for a web-hosted system funded through the Special Recreation Fund   **\$14,000**

**2. Renew the TRIMS Grounds Management Software license which has lapsed       \$800**  
Annual license for the Maintenance Management System, which includes software upgrades; **\$300**  
**Note:** The Town has taken both of these recommended actions.

**Organizational Structure:**

**Findings:** The value of the automated recreation software is most effective when a specific staff position with analytical skills is operating the automated system and coordinating databases and finances with other staff. Data collected provides: participant attendance; cost of programs and operations; revenues generated; and input to reasonable fees and charges. It also allows improvement of communications with customers; enhances determination of program viability and enables management and staff to more effectively administer the recreation programs and services.

**Recommendation**

**3. Change the now-vacant C-8 Secretary position to an Administrative Aide II (A-4) responsible to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation for:**

- Coordinating and operating the automated software system, including operations analysis, and reporting procedures.
- Preparing the special revenue funds budgets and accounting for expenditures
- Ensuring the smooth transition of Special Revenue Fund program expenditures and revenue data to the Town's MUNIS financial system
- Performing other necessary duties including Time and Attendance records; Cemetery records and sales, rentals, permits, registration and scheduling.

**Note:** No additional funding is anticipated for this change due to the relatively comparable pay-grade compared to the longevity of the recently retired incumbent. This action has also been taken.

**Note 2.** The Town has already taken this action.

## **Finance**

### **Special Recreation Fund**

The Newington Special Recreation Fund is the means by which the Town of Newington funds recreation programs and services. The general fund budget is responsible for providing maintenance and basic operational funds. To progress beyond the very basic levels of service, the Town has established a policy of charging the users of programs and services for those opportunities. These funds are used throughout the year to pay for the expenditures of these activities.

The consultants are concerned about the current levels of budgeting, tracking income and expenditures, cash handling systems, archival capacity for data and unwieldy nature of the current attempts to track this data.

The Department of Finance has a budget account for the Special Revenue Fund but the chart of accounts is inadequate to account for the details of the transactions. The MUNIS accounting system is not real time, which is a requirement for effective management of a revenue fund.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **4. Configure the automated accounting system for use with the Special Recreation Fund.**

- The ideal system would be associated with the recreation management systems so all revenues can be input automatically. This will probably require some Point-Of-Sale (POS) computers/cash registers for the front office and the concession stand at the swimming pools. **\$3,000**
- If the recreation management module is deemed too expensive then the Department should acquire Quick Books with the payroll function as a first option. **\$1,000**

#### **5. Create a logical Chart of Accounts**

##### **Revenue Cost Centers**

- Recreation Programs
- Sports
- Special Events
- Aquatics
- Playgrounds
- Program Administration (Indirect Costs)

The first step is to establish Revenue/Cost Centers (RCC). These centers make it possible to track categories of expenditures. Budgeting would take place annually for each of the centers predicated on the projected activities and expenditures for each sub-center or each separate program or service. An example of a sub-center might be in the Community Center RCC. Sub-centers could include the Gymnasium, Pre-school, Rentals, Teen Center and similar.

The Transaction codes could include but are not limited to, the following areas of revenue and expenditures.

### Revenue Codes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Fees – involves an individual program or activity</li> <li>• Class Fees – where there are multiple sessions</li> <li>• Events Admissions – Admission to a play or movie or dance etc.</li> <li>• Concession Sales</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Beverage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising Sales</li> <li>• Equipment Sales</li> <li>• Vendor Fees/sales commissions</li> <li>• Royalties</li> <li>• Contributions</li> <li>• Donations</li> <li>• Rental Fees</li> <li>• Vending Revenue</li> </ul>
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### Expenditure Codes

Personnel	Services	Staff Expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part-time Employees</li> <li>• Temporary Employees</li> <li>• Employer Social Security</li> <li>• Employer Medicare</li> <li>• Workers Compensation</li> <li>• Other benefits if appropriate</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional services</li> <li>• Technical Services</li> <li>• Entertainment Services</li> <li>• Repair and maintenance</li> <li>• Program or class equipment</li> <li>• Repair and Maintenance office Equipment</li> <li>• Rental of equipment</li> <li>• Advertising/Marketing services</li> <li>• Printing and binding</li> <li>• Postage and Delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Dues, licenses, certifications, subscriptions</li> <li>• Meals and/or lodging</li> <li>• Conferences and seminars</li> <li>• Uniforms</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity Expenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Expenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of Sales</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplies - Program/Class</li> <li>• Supplies - Training</li> <li>• Program/Class - Small equipment</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Apparel</li> <li>• Entrance fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lease Payments</li> <li>• Bank charges</li> <li>• Credit Card Fees</li> <li>• Cash over/short</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Beverages</li> <li>• Inventory</li> <li>• Resale Goods</li> </ul>

These RCC's, Revenue Transaction Titles and Expenditure Transaction Titles can be adjusted but they should cover the majority of transactions. Avoid creating non-specific transaction titles such as other, miscellaneous and similar.

### Recommendation:

#### 6. Establish Point-Of-Sale (POS) registers at each primary site, including the office and the pools.

To improve cash handling procedures the NRPD needs to have registers at each primary money connection site that has an electronic link to the server. This allows for more accurate accounting of the revenues paid in to the system.

## **Fee and Pricing Policy**

### **General Discussion**

The Departments varied offering of programs and services essentially fall into one of four categories. These four categories with brief descriptors include:

- **Public Access:** areas, facilities, and open space acquired by tax dollars resulting in a fiduciary responsibility on the part of government to afford taxpayers opportunity to use such investments.
- **Core Services:** Those activities, services, and/or programs that address issues of importance to the current and future viability and well-being of the community.
- **Quality of Life Services:** Activities, services, and programs that enhance the overall well-being and quality of life of the individuals involved in the specific activity.
- **Highly Specialized/Individualized:** Activities, services, and programs that represent one-on-one or small group involvement in highly advanced or specialized nature of a recreation or leisure activity or the restricted use by a particular group of a public area or facility.

Please note that the classifications are based upon level of public access and the focus upon group versus individual or restricted involvement.

### **Criteria**

In order to more consistently and accurately determine the best classification for the variety of programs, services, and opportunities offered, the following criteria has been developed:

#### **Public Access:**

- No registration or reservation required
- No fee charged
- No equipment or supervision provided

#### **Core Programs:**

- Nominal fee may be charged
- Registration may or may not be required
- Limited access to supplies, equipment, and supervision
- Outcomes related to priorities identified through the master plan including:
  - Increased Sense of Community
  - Healthy and Active Residents
  - “Lifetime Sports Community”
  - Sustainable Recreation Resources
  - Green Spaces and Trails
  - Future Economic Viability

#### **Quality of Life Services**

- Fee charged
- Registration required
- Expanded access to supplies, equipment, and supervision
- Makes individual contribution to overall growth, development, and well-being

**Highly Specialized/Individualized:**

Registration or reservation requirement precludes the involvement or use by other members of the public

**Fee Classification**

Fees or costs associated with various programs, services, and opportunities are generally based upon the classification category of each program, service, or opportunity. The following serves as a framework for those designations:

**Public Access**

- No Fee Charged: Not charging a fee for entry or use of some facilities and/or programs reflects either limited amenities available or the cost of collecting fees outweighing the revenue benefit.
- Symbolic Pricing: relatively low fees assessed to programs as a mechanism for either accounting for participation levels or ensuring interest of would-be participants.

**Core Services**

- Symbolic Pricing: relatively low fees assessed to programs as a mechanism for either accounting for participation levels or ensuring interest of would-be participants.
- Benefit-based Pricing: fees and charges for programs and services based on the extent of public vs. private benefits; this approach could accommodate programs, facilities, and services that support and serve the overall community viability and well being
- Cost-recovery Pricing: establishing fees upon the basis of the percentage of program or service costs that the departments deems appropriate to recover; could vary from 0 to 100%+.

**Quality of Life**

- Cost-recovery Pricing: establishing fees upon the basis of the percentage of program or service costs that the departments deems appropriate to recover; could vary from 0 to 100%+.
- Market-driven Pricing: establishing a fee for a program or service based upon what the market will bear and/or the demand for a particular program or service

**Highly Specialized/Individualized**

- Cost-plus Pricing: establishing fees that cover all direct, indirect, and associated costs of the program or service and generate revenue above and beyond costs that can be used for other purposes, i.e. underwriting the cost of other programs or services, paying for the major renovations of the facility generating the revenue, etc.
- Market-driven Pricing: establishing a fee for a program or service based upon what the market will bear and/or the demand for a particular program or service

**Recommendation:**

**7. Adopt a fee and pricing policy** The following draft policy can be modified as desired.

**Fee and Pricing Policy**

The Town of Newington CT, provides facilities, services and programs for a price that is consistent with the median market rate provided by other private, non-profit and public service provider's in the adjacent jurisdictions. Staff will survey local businesses and adjacent jurisdictions every two years to ensure that program prices are in the middle of the range of competitors pricing and compare program offerings for trends in public interest. In general, the programs and services should recover their direct cost for production and promotion of the activity. They should also recover indirect costs for program administration of the activities. Direct costs include the cost of providing the program or service such as instructor salaries and program materials. It also includes the cost of promoting the activity. Indirect costs include the generic costs of providing equipment; supplies; materials; and other services or goods that are needed for all activities. . As needed, prices may be adjusted to provide value to Newington residents. Exceptions may include the following:

- Certain Core Services (such as a drowning prevention program) important to the well being of the town residents may be offered for a minimal or no charge.
- Special events and other promotional activities designed to introduce citizens to the Department programs may be offered for a minimal or no charge.
- Programs and services that are new or in their first years of offering may not fully recover the promotional and indirect costs

**Staff Training and Development**

All permanent staff should be required to attend knowledge and skill development classes as needed to ensure they are aware of the latest methods, techniques information related to their specialty. The Superintendent and Division Directors should develop high quality staff development programs for all part-time and temporary employees. Employees should be given clear and consistent training on what their jobs are, the standards of measurement, and the necessity of good customer services and professional demeanor as representatives of the Town of Newington to the public. An employee reference manual might be developed to guide employees when they may be on their own. All employees may need to be trained in proper data collection methods.

**Recommendation:**

**8. Implement a professional training and development plan and program.**

Human resources are the Department's most essential and critical asset. This is especially true in a rapidly changing technological, economic, social and legal world. Ongoing professional development and training program is essential to effective staff and board capability and productivity.

**Types of Training Proposed**

Recreation Programming and Service Training that relates to the populations served by each staff person. Training with peers is available in the region and usually involves a two-day session - Registration fees generally include: education sessions, CEUs, lodging, meals. One training session per rec staff member per year for programming- **\$1200/Year**

NRPA Revenue Management School. The School runs for one week and offers three levels of training each year. Recommend all rec staff attend at least levels one and two over a six-year schedule. **\$1200/Year**

NRPA Maintenance Management School – The School runs for one week and offers three levels of training each year. Three top maintenance staff should attend at least levels one and two. Would mean two staff attending during years two and three of a four-year schedule. **\$2400/Year**

NRPA National Congress – Participation by three individuals annually. This would include the following individuals: Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent for Recreation or Assistant Superintendent for Parks (alternating years); and 1 board member (selected by the Board).

Annual average Not-to-exceed **\$3600**

Specialized Trainings – American Camping Association, Athletic Business Conference, New England Training Institute, others to be identified as appropriate. **\$1,000**

**Annual Budget Summary**

<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>\$8,400</b>
<b>Successive Budget Appropriation</b>	<b>\$9,600</b>
<b>Staff Development and Training</b>	<b>\$5,800</b>

**Years 2-4 annually  
after year 6**



## **Maintaining Existing Resources:**

Over time, the department has taken on additional responsibilities while simultaneously dealing with finite or diminishing resources. These actions result in the need to address maintenance backlog and restoration of existing physical resources.

### **Maintenance Resources**

The previous materials have provided a perspective on the types of parks and areas that are maintained by the Park and Grounds Division. While the resources to be maintained are significant they do not represent the entire picture. Since there appeared to be a significant maintenance deficit, the consultants conducted a maintenance workload study. This study examines the spectrum of areas and physical assets that the staff is charged with maintaining. This “workload” quantity is then given further definition by assigning values for frequency of maintenance actions that calculates the total annual workload. The standard of measurement is either the standard used by the staff, industry standards, or standards derived from known productive sources over several years. The net result is a number of hours that each maintenance action requires over the course of a year. This number can then be interpolated into the Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) needed in the workforce.

The table on the next page shows the maintenance activities for the Parks. In the eighth row the maintenance activity is titled Mowing. The maintenance activity involved in mowing includes mowing open areas and other assigned Park mowing. It does not include mowing athletic fields. The mowing requirement is 115 acres out of the total park acreage. Mowing is usually done weekly but involves mowing 24 times per year or a total of 2760 acres a year. With fences and gates, picking up trash and big mowers and little mowers the average time to mow an acre is 2.5 staff hours per acre. This means that staff spends 6900 hours a year mowing the grass in the parks. The hours are equal to 3.32 FTEs for mowing of the parks alone.

If all of the park maintenance activities were performed according to the workload and at the standard specified it would require 18.89 FTEs. Even counting the seasonal employees the Division seldom has 16 FTEs during the year. This number does not take into account all of the other maintenance requirements. The Parks and Grounds Division is charged with maintaining the following areas:

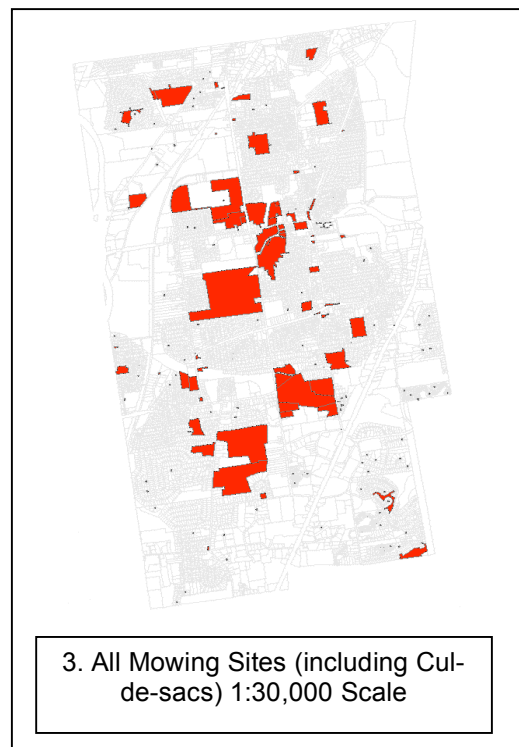
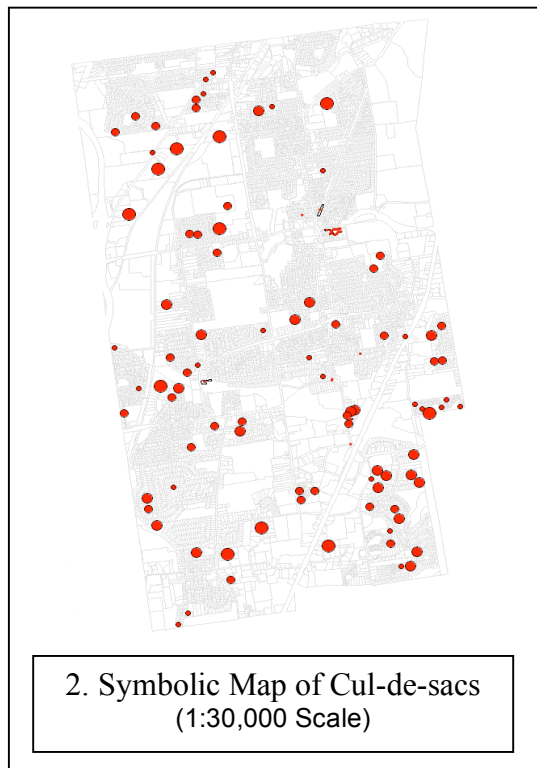
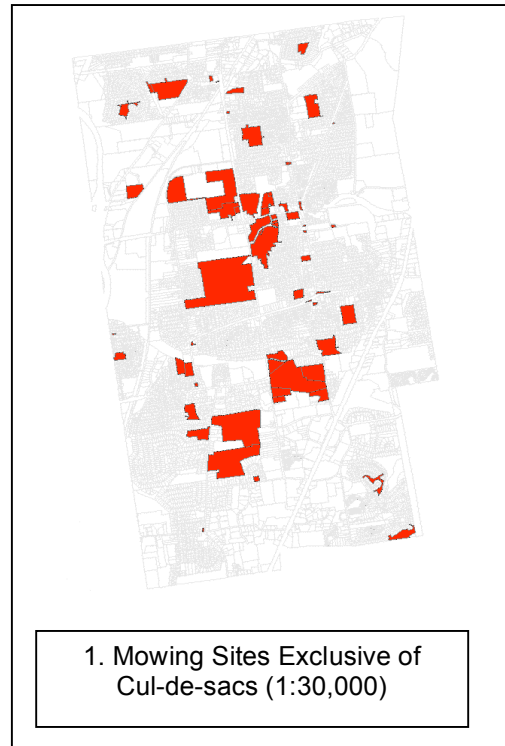
- Parks
- School Grounds
- Public Facility Grounds
- Cemeteries
- Street Trees
- Circles, Cul de Sacs and Miscellaneous Areas
- Medians and Related Areas

The graphics on the next page show the distribution of the maintained areas. Keep in mind that each area is supposed to be mowed and have trash picked up every week for a minimum of 24 weeks. In

the fall the leaves in many of these sites need to be raked to the curbs (4 staff are assigned for 6 weeks to help the Town vacuum leaves). In the winter the sidewalks and parking lots need to be cleared of ice and snow. Again, Parks and Grounds staff are sent to assist the Town with plowing the streets. These graphics are followed by the Maintenance Workload Data for each area maintained.

Graphic 1 shows all the areas of the Town that are maintained by the Parks and Grounds Division. It does not include the Cul-de-sacs. A general list of the maintenance activities performed in the parks is included in the table showing Park Maintenance workload.

Graphic 2 shows the Cul-de-sacs in a symbolic form (expanded in size 100 times). These 113 areas represent only 6.14 acres, but take an average of 45 minutes each to mow and trim due to travel, location and configuration. That equals three staff people full-time each week just to maintain these small areas.



Graphic 3 shows all the maintained areas including the Cul-de-sacs. The cul-de-sacs are shown at regular scale and are almost imperceptible in the graphic.

### Maintenance Workloads

Newington Parks and Grounds Division

<b>Parks Maintenance</b>								
<b>Maintenance Tasks</b>	<b>Units In Inventory</b>	<b>Units of Measure</b>	<b>Service Level</b>	<b>Annual Freq.</b>	<b>Total Annual Units</b>	<b>Staff Hrs./ Unit</b>	<b>Staff Hrs. Per Year</b>	<b>FTE's Per Year</b>
Athletic Fields *	12	Field	Daily	210	2520	1.5	3780	1.82
Basketball Courts	8	Court	Weekly	28	224	1	224	0.11
Cemetery Operations	13.79	Acres	Weekly	28	386.12	4	1544.48	0.74
Cemetery Interments	1	Interment/mo	9/mo	108	108	10.7	1155.6	0.56
Equipment R & M	30	Piece	Daily	180	5400	0.5	2700	1.30
Irrigation	10	Site	3/wk	20	200	2	400	0.19
Leaf Collection	50	Acres	Annual	1	50	5	250	0.12
Mowing	115	Acres	Weekly	24	2760	2.5	6900	3.32
Parking lots R & M	8	Lot	Annual	1	8	10.5	84	0.04
Picnic Facilities R&M	5	Shelter	Annual	1	5	20	100	0.05
Playgrounds I & R	10	Unit	Weekly	30	300	3	900	0.43
Pond Maintenance	4	Pond	1/5 Yrs	0.2	0.8	40	32	0.02
Park Cleanup	14	Park	Daily/season	180	2520	0.75	1890	0.91
Restrooms/Portables	28	Facility	Daily/season	180	5040	0.75	3780	1.82
Roads, trails and Paths	8.16	1000 LF	Annual	1	8.16	40	326.4	0.16
Seasonal Field Prep	7	Field	2/yr.	2	14	72	1008	0.48
Signage	14	Signs	Annual	1	14	4	56	0.03
Snow and Ice Removal Parking lot	8	Lot	Per Event	12	96	6	576	0.28
Snow and Ice removal Sidewalks	8.16	1000 L. F	Per Event	12	97.92	7.5	734.4	0.35
Swimming Pools	2	Pool	Daily/Season	120	240	4	960	0.46
Tennis Courts	5	Court	Weekly	28	140	4	560	0.27
Travel between Sites	14	Staff	Daily	260	3640	1	3640	1.75
Tree Hazards	1	Tree	Per Event	30	30	5	150	0.07
Trimming	25	1000 LF	Per Mowing	24	600	1.5	900	0.43
Turf Management**	50	Acres	8/Yr.	8	400	1.57	628	0.30
Vandalism	1	Event	3/wk/Season	75	75	3	225	0.11
Volleyball Court	1	Court	Weekly	28	28	1.5	42	0.02
Winterization	25	Spigots	Bi-annual	2	50	0.5	25	0.01
Work Orders	1	Each	8/wk	400	400	3	1200	0.58
Vacation	14	Staff	14 d/yr	14	196	8	1568	0.75
Personal Leave	14	Staff	4 d/yr	2.4	33.6	8	268.8	0.13
Sick Leave	14	Staff	12 d/yr	8	112	8	896	0.43
Holiday	14	Staff	13.5 d/yr	13.5	189	8	1512	0.73
Other Leave	14	Staff	3 d/yr	2.5	35	8	280	0.13
							39,295.68	18.89

\* **Athletic Fields** - includes mowing, trimming, blowing/bagging, infield preparation, bases and plates, dugouts, backstops, scorer's box, lining, safety tracks, fencing, and bleachers, goal maintenance, painting of lines, sodding

\*\* **Turf Management** - includes fertilizing, aeration, slicing, dethatching, topdressing, overseeding and chemical applications as appropriate.

\*\*\* **Tasks not documented** - Drainage basin and outlet cleanup, fences, parking spaces, stream banks, trails, trashcans,

**Park Sites Maintained = 226.14 Acres**

<b>PARKS</b>	<b>Area Sq. Ft</b>	<b>Acres</b>
BEACON PARK	362,383.16	8.32
LITTLE BROOK PARK	373,604.62	8.58
CHURCHILL PARK	731,954.35	16.80
CLEM LEMIRE	302,065.70	6.93
CLEM LEMIRE	2,315,946.56	53.17
SEYMOUR PARK	173,511.54	3.98
BADGER FIELD	186,879.36	4.29
MILL POND	1,451,237.13	33.32
MARY WELLES PARK	92,337.22	2.12
CANDLEWYCK PARK	213,244.74	4.90
STARR PARK	172,462.56	3.96
MILLBROOK PARK	657,824.29	15.10
EAGLE PARK	261,290.12	6.00
BEECHWOOD PARK	191,100.73	4.39
YOUNG FARM	2,364,928.59	54.29
		226.14

<b>Schools Maintenance</b>								
<b>Maintenance Tasks</b>	<b>Units In Inventory</b>	<b>Units of Measure</b>	<b>Service Level</b>	<b>Annual Freq.</b>	<b>Total Annual Units</b>	<b>Staff Hrs. / Unit</b>	<b>Staff Hrs. / Year</b>	<b>FTE's Per Year</b>
Athletic Fields *	26	Field	3/wk	84	2184	1.5	3276	1.58
Irrigation	11	Site	3/wk	20	220	2	440	0.21
School Grounds	110	Acres	Weekly	24	2640	0.5	1320	0.63
Turf Management**	40	Acres	8/yr.	8	320	1.57	502.4	0.24
Mowing	80	Acres	Weekly	24	1920	2.5	4800	2.31
Trimming	4.8	1000 LF	Per Mowing	24	115.2	1.5	172.8	0.08
Mulching	7	School	Annual	1	7	12	84	0.04
Seasonal Field Prep	26	Field	bi-annual	2	52	24	1248	0.60
Leaf Collection *	110	Acres	Annual	1	110	5	550	0.26
Snow and Ice Removal Parking lot	12	Lot	Event	12	144	6	864	0.42
Snow and Ice removal Sidewalks	4.8	1000 L.F	Event	12	57.6	7.5	432	0.21
							<b>13689.2</b>	<b>6.58</b>

**Tasks not documented:** Landscaping, including mulching and shrub and formal tree care.

**School Sites Maintained = 195.87 Acres**

Schools	Area in Sq. Ft.	Acres
HIGH SCHOOL	2722648.73	62.50
J WALLACE & J PATERSON	2808879.08	64.48
MARTIN KELLOGG	750011.47	17.22
RUTH CHAFFEE	558998.21	12.83
ELIZABETH GREEN	589043.57	13.52
ANNA REYNOLDS	1102729.43	25.32
		195.87

Town Maintenance								
Maintenance Tasks	Units In Inventory	Units of Measure	Service Level	Annual Freq.	Total Annual Units	Staff Hrs./ Unit	Staff Hrs./ Year	FTE's Per Year
Mowing Facilities	43.78	Acres	Weekly	24	1050.72	2	2101.44	1.01
Mowing Circles et. al.	113	Sites	Monthly	6	678	1.5	1017	0.49
Mowing Medians	8.2	Miles	Monthly	6	49.2	4	196.8	0.09
Trash Cleanup	19	Site	Weekly	28	532	1.57	835.24	0.40
Leaf Collection	72	Miles	Annual	1	72	13.5	972	0.47
Snow and Ice Removal Parking lot	6	Lot	12/Yr.	12	72	6	432	0.21
Snow and Ice removal Sidewalks	4.8	1000 L. F	12/Yr.	12	57.6	7.5	432	0.21
Snow and Ice removal Streets	1	Snow event	12/Yr.	12	12	70	840	0.40
							<b>6826.48</b>	<b>3.28</b>

**Tasks Not Documented:** Certain activities are not included in the total because the data is not available to document the time it takes to do the projects. Some of the items include landscaping of facilities, shrub and tree care, flowerpots, etc. Other tasks involve special Events including putting up holiday lights, Flag poles and flags, Hanging banners, putting up fences and picking up trash after the events

There are two types of tables presented in this section. Some of the tables show the sites that are maintained in the various categories. The table at the top of this page entitled School sites Maintained is an example of this table type. It includes the school sites and the acreage of the total site. Note that this includes the building, parking areas and other asphalt covered property that is maintained only in cases of snow or ice. The actual mowed areas are smaller due to the built and forested areas. Other tables show the actual workload for the Maintenance staff. The second table on this page is an example of this table type. In this case it identifies the maintenance activities performed on Town properties. The table on the next page shows us that the above tasks are performed at the town hall, library, senior and disabled center, firehouses etc.

**Public Sites Maintained = 43.78 Acres**

<b>Public Bldgs. and Spaces</b>	<b>Area in Sq. Ft.</b>	<b>Acres</b>
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT	406764.48	9.34
KELLOGG EDDY	68457.06	1.57
KELSEY HOUSE	21541.25	0.49
TOWN HALL	550929.24	12.65
LIBRARY	48865.61	1.12
SENIOR CENTER	125039.13	2.87
OLD FH #3	23207.00	0.53
FD CO #4	7850.19	0.18
FD CO #1	94522.14	2.17
FD CO #2	62783.36	1.44
FD CO #3	34419.72	0.79
OLD FH	5721.02	0.13
AMBULANCE	21992.61	0.50
WELLES DRIVE	42105.78	0.97
1	28544.99	0.66
TRIM MOWING SITE	7316.58	0.17
RENTAL	12572.95	0.29
TRIM MOWING SITE	2325.85	0.05
TRIM MOWING SITE	342139.77	7.85
		<b>43.78</b>

The tables on the next two pages show the Town properties that should be maintained by the Parks and Grounds staff. The consultant has reduced the frequency of mowing to six times a year. In reality the crews seldom have time to maintain these properties and only respond to specific requests to mow a specific site.

**Circles, Cul de Sacs and Miscellaneous Areas to be maintained = 113 Sites 6.164 Acres**

<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>Location</b>
3901	Ancient Hwy	1890	Great Oak La	1789	Saddle Hill Cir
1281	Apple Hl	1962	Harold Dr	1802	Salem Dr
1855	Arrowhead Cir	1199	Hazelmere Ct	1641	Settlers Knl
1319	Barn Hill La	2187	Hillcrest Av	1162	Spur La
2242	Barn Hill La	2781	Holly Dr	3236	Stamm Rd
1066	Beechwood Ct	1978	Hopkins Dr	2219	Stonewall Ct
1863	Berkeley Cir	1883	Hopkins Dr	1186	Summit St
1977	Birch St	1532	Hopkins Dr	1720	Sunrise Av
1145	Birchlawn Ter	2129	Hopkins Dr	36	Superior Av
925	Bittersweet Ct	1969	Jefferson Ct	847	Tavener Cir
1896	Boylston St	1754	Jeffrey La	1943	Timber La
1653	Brick Walk La	694	King Arthurs Way	1944	Trotter La
1299	Bridle Path	1131	Kitts La	1948	Trout Brook Cir
2703	Budney Rd	1898	Lexington Cir	1985	Turkey Hill Rd
3503	Cedar Ridge Rd	89	Louis St	1197	Valentine Cir
1806	Church Ter	1922	Lucas Cir	335	Welles Dr
1858	Cinnamon Rd	2324	Meadowview Ct	972	Winterberry Ct
2001	Clarendon Ter	1185	Mohawk Cir	1825	Woods Way
1522	Coachmen La	910	Mulberry Ct	2293	Winding Brook La
1282	Coburn Cir	162	New Britain Av	35640	Olive St
1284	Colby Cir	18	New Britain Av	47900	Maple Hill Av
1821	Concord Cir	1942	Occhialini Ct	5427	Lowrey Pl
1896	Copper Beech La	2822	Old Farm Dr	423	Lowrey Pl
1758	Cricket La	1644	Old Hatchery La	322	Lowrey Pl
1880	Dean Dr	1743	Paris La	2719	Lowrey Pl
2326	Deer Path	1772	Pebble Ct	1450	Lowrey Pl
1872	Centerwood Rd	972	Pepper Bush La	268	Lowrey Pl
3804	Commerce Ct	1948	Ponderosa La	274	Lowrey Pl
2788	Hollow Tree	2904	Progress Cir	274	Lowrey Pl
1869	Westgate Cir	1136	Raynel Rd	261	Lowrey Pl
675	Sunny Brook Dr	2046	Red Rock Cir	284	Lowrey Pl
2018	Eckert Rd	1858	Veterans Cir	259	Lowrey Pl
1818	Elliott La	649	Robbins Av	297	Lowrey Pl
1860	Elm Ridge Ter	2867	Rockwell Rd	289	Lowrey Pl
1339	Erwin Ct	4549	Rosemary La	132	Lowrey Pl
1927	Fennwood Cir			285	Lowrey Pl
2326	Fieldstone Pth			275	Lowrey Pl
1901	Forest Dr			113	Lowrey Pl
1949	Franklin Cir			3906	Hipkins Dr
1538	Gail Cir				
1422	Grandview Dr				

**Medians To be Maintained by Parks and Grounds Division = 8.2 miles**

<b>Median Location</b>	<b>Linear Feet</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Across from Brook Street	129	3 passes
Alumni Road	1500	3 passes
Ancient Highway	100	2 passes
Anna Reynolds School path,	960 feet	3 passes
At #249 Conn. Ave	60	
Bridal Path	175	3 passes
Brockett Street	185	2 passes
Brookdale Corner plus	360	3 passes
Brookside Road North side of Brook and bank	5200	
Chaffee School path	195	3 passes
Connecticut Ave – Augusta Drive southward	350	
Costello Road	860	4 passes
Ct. Ave & Mountain Road to corner	500	
Culver Street	1430	2 passes
Day Street- by Mirabilis	50	
Day Street Extension	360	
Deming Road	2580	3 passes
Eagle Park Pathways	900	2 passes
Fenn Road- Fenwick heading South	5885	3 passes
Firehouse #1	100	4 passes
Francis Drive across from #72	130	3 passes, both sides of road,
Francis Drive, Day St. corner	171	2 passes [shrubs],
Griswold Street	3000	2 passes, corner, and turnaround
Groveland to Chestnut path	365	3 passes
Kimberly Rd various places	780	3 passes
Kitts Lane	6230	4 passes
Lamplighter Lane	1050	3 passes
Main Street along brook heading North		4 hours
Maselli Road	2700	3 passes
Mountain Rd Hartford Ave to Jersey barrier	4650	
Pane Road	1000	
Pfister Drive	180 x 40 area	
Pheasant Run	600	4 passes
Pheasant Run path	600	3 passes
Quincy Lane	240	4 passes
Richard Street/ Rockwell	350 x 35 area	
South field of brook		3 hours
Starr Ave by Am. Radio Relay	260	3 passes
Young Farm	7 days	1 pass

**Findings:**

When evaluating the workload expected of the park maintenance staff it becomes obvious that the workload far exceeds the capacity of the staff to perform the duties. At the current time there are 14 full time maintenance staff working for the Park Maintenance Supervisor. In addition, the unit usually hires about six seasonal maintenance workers for 120 days during the season. With the



seasonal hires accounting for two Full-Time-Equivalents (FTE's) the department has approximately 16 FTE's available during the year. This essentially allows the maintenance staff to take care of the athletic fields, mow the parks, schools and public facilities, and respond to selected work orders. It does not leave time for proper maintenance of the resources. Facility categories listed comprise the total responsibility for the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Division.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Parks	14	226.14
Schools	7	195.87
Public Facilities	12	24.46
Cemetery	2	14.07
Miscellaneous Town Properties	7	19.32
Circles/Cul de Sacs etc.	117	6.14 (2334.73 sq. ft. average)
Medians/roadsides	N/A	8.2 miles (one pass)

Typical maintenance actions might include mowing, trimming, edging, blowing, or bagging grass clippings, landscaping, mulching, aerating, fertilizing, chemical applications, leaf removal, snow and ice removal from sidewalks and parking.

If all of the physical assets are maintained at a sustainable maintenance level, an evaluation of the workload shows a need for 27 FTE's or an increase of 11 FTE's. These numbers are problematic.

Most, if not all of the workers are needed primarily in the growing season, especially in the spring from late March to late June.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **9. Reduce the Maintenance workload – consider the following:**

Systematically eliminate the need for town maintenance at all Cul-de-sacs, medians and circles, by:

- Transferring the parcels to private ownership
- Landscaping the parcels for low maintenance
- Remove the grassed circles from the Cul-de-sacs

Consider contracting high maintenance trim mowing public facility sites to private contractors. If this is a union issue allow the union to bid the work as well.

Reconfigure the Service Levels for maintenance of the parks to reduce maintenance in selected parks or portions of parks.

Consider an Adopt-a-Park or Adopt-a-Field Program that allows a sports association to have priority use of a field in their priority season in return for guided maintenance of that field or park.

Increase full-time staffing by at least three maintenance employees according to the needs as presented by the Department.

- Full time Staff costs (with all benefits): \$200,000.00/year
- 12 seasonal, 120 day positions Estimate \$75,000
- Equipment to support new staff \$52,000

#### Budget Impact Estimate

Positions plus support equipment estimate	\$327,000
Annual recurring costs of	\$275,000

**10. Increase Resources to meet the remaining workload requirements.** Consider any or all of the following actions:

- Hire part-time positions to work from 3/15 to 10/15 each year
- Add Additional Seasonal 120 day positions for 3/15 to 6/15 and 8/15 to 11/15 as well as for the 5/15 to 8/15 normal time period
- Increase full-time staffing by at least three maintenance employees according to the needs as presented by the Department.
- Review the Schools/Park department agreement to clarify those actions that will be considered supplemental to grounds maintenance of the schools and the conditions under, which snow and ice removal will occur. Determine if a different distribution of funding is warranted.

## Historic Property

With the efforts of the community to preserve historic properties such as the Kellogg Eddy House and grounds and the Kelsey House, agreements were reached distributing responsibilities between the between the Town of Newington and the Newington Historical Society & Trust, Inc. The Town accepted the responsibility for maintaining the infrastructure. During the agreement period, the responsibility for building maintenance has been the responsibility of the Newington Parks and Recreation Department. This has failed to provide the needed maintenance because the required funding was not always available and/or was not a departmental priority.

### Recommendations:

#### **11. Transfer the building maintenance responsibility for the Historic Properties to the Facilities Management Unit of the Town.**

Parks has no staff qualified to maintain buildings. This would result in transfer of about \$15,000 annually that pays for utilities and operational repairs (This action has been taken). Upon completion of renovations the budget necessary to sustain the condition of the historic properties should be increased according to a maintenance management plan.

**Park and Recreation Budget Estimate (\$15,000.00)**

## **Swimming Pools**

The two outdoor swimming pools in Newington have grown with the population of the town. Few can probably remember a time when the pools at Churchill and Mill Pond were not available for swimming. Unfortunately, that fact also indicates the age of the pools. According to the publication “Celebrating 50 Years,” a history of parks and recreation in Newington, Mill Pond Pool was opened in 1959 and Churchill pool was opened in 1965. The expected life of a pool is 40 to 50 years. Although both Churchill and Mill Pond are currently serviceable they have exceeded their expected structural life and the Town must face a decision about replacement in the near term future.

### **Recommendation:**

#### **12. Existing Pool Recommendations – Churchill**

- 12.A. Continue to operate both Churchill and Mill Pond until Mill Pond is renovated, repair deck surfaces
- 12.B. Provide funding for pool deck repair - \$5,000

#### **13. Existing Pool Recommendations – Mill Pond**

- 13.A. Continue to operate Mill Pond until Mill Pond is ready for renovation, repair deck surfaces
- 13.B. Complete an aesthetic & structural repairs of the Mill Pond Bathhouse, Replace ceiling tiles in men’s room. \$15,000

#### **14. Discuss indoor pool needs for the Town and the High School to determine any future opportunities for an accessible shared indoor facility.**

The indoor pool at the high school has several aesthetic problems that make it less desirable. One of the main issues is its lack of accessibility during the day for older active adults who could use it for exercise classes.

## Neighborhood Parks

### Findings:

Each of the neighborhood parks should have a small serviceable playground, an open play area, picnic tables, multi-purpose court and benches. These amenities should be maintained on a weekly schedule during the spring, summer and fall seasons. Some of the neighborhood parks are in need of significant upgrades including:

- Re-grade and level open play area
- Repair or remove backstop
- Re-locate or re-grade the playground area
- Repair or replace the multi-purpose court
- Install new playground apparatus, picnic tables and benches
- Develop turf management program for open play area.
- Repair or remove fencing
- Pond clean up

### Recommendation:

**15. The minimum estimated funds needed to bring the neighborhood parks up to standard is \$185,000.00 distributed accordingly**

Beechwood	\$35,000
Beacon Park	\$35,000
Candlewyck Park	\$25,000
Eagle Lantern	\$25,000
Little Brook	\$15,000
Mary Welles	\$15,000
Seymour Park	\$15,000
Starr Park	\$20,000

These funds would need to be in excess of the current capital allotment.

**Recommendation 16. Provide adequate funding and resources to maintain the neighborhood parks at a sustainable level.**

- 16.A. Request a maintenance plan and cost for each neighborhood park as part of the landscape design for each site. \$5,000 per developed acre, annually.

## Clem Lemire Park

### Findings:

The road, parking and medians at Clem Lemire have no form or structure. Parking occurs on grassed areas and traffic in general is moving too fast through the park.

### Recommendations

**17. Improve parking and traffic flow**

- Provide additional landscaping for parking area near the skate facilities
- Include benches for skate facility spectators

- Consider methods to ensure traffic observes 15 mph speed limit
- Estimate for contracted work and design **\$50,0000**

**Note:** This recommendation may be affected by the location of the recommended synthetic turf facility.

## **Parks & Playfield Projects**

### **Findings:**

The following projects are priority projects predicated on safety and code requirements and citations. These projects are in need of immediate funding for FY 07-08 if not sooner. This funding requirement is in excess of the \$50,000 dollars typically allocated in the Parks and Playfields Improvement Account of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Given the age of the facilities these funds will be needed on an annual basis until the parks are in sustainable condition.

### **Projects**

Mill Pond Pool Ceiling Tiles	\$ 7,000	Health Dept. cited
Pool Painting	\$ 5,000	delay will push back both pools
Locker Room non-skid surface	\$ 5,000	safety concern
Mill Pond bridge replacement	\$ 20,000	safety per CIRMA inspection
MP Fishing Dock Handrail repair	\$ 450	safety per CIRMA
Bleachers – railing	\$ 10,000	Building Code violation
MP Tennis – fence – base wire	\$ 2,300	
Churchill Lights – remote timer	\$ 1,000	
Skate park Ramp (corner)	\$ 1,000	
Gym Floor re-finishing	\$ 20,000	
Parks Garage Painting	<u>\$ 5000</u>	
Funds needed for critical projects	<b>\$ 76,750</b>	

### **Recommendation:**

#### **18. Provide adequate capital funding for unanticipated expenditures during the year.**

Continue to provide undesignated annual CIP funds in the minimum amount of \$50,000 in the Parks and Playfields Improvement Account. These funds are necessary for the typical annual expenditures related to vandalism, wear and tear, improvements and replacements and other unanticipated costs incurred during a normal year.

## **Maintenance Management**

### **Findings:**

As the Division of Parks and Grounds Maintenance has involved over the years it has become increasingly challenged to balance the maintenance workload and the available resources. One area that has suffered from the workload burden is the ability to track the maintenance needs and manage the entire scope of physical assets that are in need of maintenance. The following recommendations are basic maintenance management requirements and it is worth the effort regardless of the time required.

**Recommendation:****19 – Complete an inventory of all physical assets for the NPRD. Actions may include:**

- Have staff systematically record all physical assets over time. Providing a description including details of any replacement items such as manufacturer, and model number as well as name and type of item.
- Determine the maintenance actions and the frequency of maintenance for each asset.
- Distinguish between preventive maintenance and cyclical maintenance actions
- The inventory should include replacement materials and consumable supplies i.e. signs

**Note:** If available, seek input from drafting classes or mechanical or agricultural systems training centers (Community Colleges etc.)

**20 – Revise the current cyclical maintenance schedule for the NPRD Grounds.**

This recommendation may include actions such as identifying cyclical maintenance items in the inventory such as playground sections needing replacement, tennis court, net poles, court surfaces, windscreens line painting, athletic field fences, dugouts, goals, sod, etc.

**Note:** Much of this is done

Develop a schedule and budget for life cycle and replacement as well as estimates of inflated cost. Use a 3 to 4 % Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) unless trends indicate otherwise. Try to adjust or phase annual costs to a consistent number needed yearly. This makes the budget planning easier and creates an expectation of the annual need for maintenance activities. Avoid large spikes in the maintenance budget needs, if possible. To facilitate budgeting track the annual replacement costs of the cyclical assets as well as any repair costs, frequency of repair and downtime.

**Recommendation 21. Compartmentalize the various maintenance functions and track the time, workload and cost of performing each over the course of the year.**

- 21.A. Create logical categories of similar work which may include:
  1. Trim mowing/public facilities,
  2. School grounds,
  3. Parks,
  4. Cemeteries
  5. Other to include medians, cul-de-sacs, circles, special events, and vandalism.
- 21.B. Create a code for each category and include that code on all work orders.

**22 – Clarify or develop the maintenance standards for categories of maintenance for use in training and evaluation of performance. This may include:**

- Formalize the standards currently used for trim mowing, park, and athletic fields..
- Utilize the maintenance standards available from NRPA to establish standards for courts and other areas that don't currently have standards.
- State the standards or provide pictures that clearly show what level of quality is expected for the adopted standards.
- Determine the cost of providing services at the desired standards
- Submit the standards for adoption by the Parks & Recreation Board

## **Meeting the Needs of Changing Community and Society**

### **Findings:**

#### **Programming Orientation and Approach**

The philosophy and orientation of programming should shift from a primary emphasis upon marketing to an approach that incorporates the marketing orientation, but with a primary focus upon outcomes that are important for individuals and the community. This requires the development of a program pricing policy based upon level of positive outcomes for the general public and the community.

The important benefits and outcomes identified with specific implications for recreation programming include:

- Increased sense of community;
- Healthy and active residents; and
- Reinforcement of lifetime sports community designation.

Program plans without specific scheduling and staffing addressed should be completed one year in advance rather than seasonally; this improves the budgeting process as well as the outcomes based approach.

The division of labor among programming staff during the summer season makes a great deal of sense, but programming throughout the other seasons should assign duties and responsibilities based upon commonality of population groups, outcomes, or program area.

The use of a program matrix that is based upon population groups, outcomes, and program areas and forms might work well for this department.

#### **Program Areas and Structure**

Extensive use of class and team structures of programming is common with a marketing orientation approach, but tends to attract and serve individuals who prefer this structured, organized approach to recreation.

Unstructured program structure such as special events, clubs and affinity groups, and drop-ins will support “sense of community” better than individual, structured approaches such as classes.

The return to mobile recreation or outreach programming could support bringing people in neighborhood areas together as well as reaching residents who are not normally involved with departmental programming.

“Healthy and active residents” can be supported by designing classes and other programs to encourage active, independent engagement in leisure timer activities; this may involve “getting started” clinics to help people pursue a new interest followed by resources that will enable them to continue if they so choose.

“Lifetime sports” skill is key to the “healthy and active residents” outcome as well. Lifetime sports are not as dependent upon groups of people for participation as would football or baseball and the list of such sports can now be expanded to incorporate the newer lifetime sports such as yoga, geo-caching, etc. Review the fee structure for traditional lifetime sports being currently offered by the department such as tennis and golf and reconfigure ways to make those “getting started” opportunities more accessible to more residents.

All non-full time staff of the department providing programs and activities for the residents should be oriented towards incorporating the important outcomes into their instruction or coaching.

### **Target Population Groups**

As in most communities, it is easiest to reach and attract younger children and youth with specific interests and talents to programming, particularly using the marketing orientation approach, there is a need to most particularly reach those adolescents who are not academically or athletically involved in the middle or high school levels. The department could offer semi-structured, less traditional physical activities and options as well as collaborating even more with youth services and the library for joint programming endeavors.

Mature adults are not specifically targeted and being served. As this group begins to age, the accompanying life stage changes will make them natural and important targets for active, healthy lifestyles. Specific clinics or getaway opportunities should be developed for this group. The baby boomers will not be willing to be subsumed under the Senior Center umbrella and the department’s programming should reflect this generational shift.

For senior adults, it is important that they remain healthy, active, and community-connected. The department does provide some limited programming for this group at the Senior Center. It is suggested that as much as possible programming for this group should be offered both inside and outside of the Center to keep them connected with the greater community.

The involvement of residents with various disabilities is important to an active, engaged community. While there are some traditional approaches such as Special Olympics, there needs to be a more concerted focus upon these residents. It is recommended that an ad hoc group convened by the department gather professionals from the school department, senior and disability center, and other service providers to create a strategy as to how to identify these individuals and make contact with them as the initial step for seeking greater involvement and participation.

### **Programming Recommendations**

**23. Shift the Programming Orientation and Approach from marketing alone to market outcomes**

**24. Diversify the Program Areas and Forms**

**25. Diversify Target Population Groups**



## **Marketing**

### **Findings:**

#### **Program Marketing**

NRPD can create target market segments for the community using the demographic and lifestyle profiles included within this study. These efforts are done to a very limited extent at the present time and need to be increased as part of overall program and service improvements

The department can develop strategies for programs and services based upon individual, group, and community as a whole. Incorporate the usage patterns and demographic information from the new automated registration system to support these efforts

Developing a program matrix that incorporates major community outcomes as well as variables such as time, price, etc. is helpful and the automated registration system will provide program life cycle information upon which marketing strategies can be developed

Program life cycle information can be used to develop any of the following marketing strategies: market penetration, market development, market extension, and diversification.

#### **Service Marketing**

Although Newington's NRPD staff conduct numerous programs and seek diversity within the offerings they are hampered by the lack of knowledge about the customers and the non-customers. It is imperative that the Division begin maintaining a customer database. The new recreation management software will be of major value in this effort. However, additional research will be needed to develop an understanding of those non-customers.

The highest priority marketing task is to determine the current customers desired outcomes. Developing a market position consistent with mission and important outcomes; evaluating the cycle of service, all contacts residents have with the department from initial phone call to end of program will greatly enhance the ability to serve the target audiences of the immediate future. These needs include:

The Active Adult – 55 or Better - Focus program and service offerings on the rapidly growing group of older adults who prefer to remain active and involved members of the community.

Access and Opportunities to Experience Open Space – This is a strong trend nationally, is the top ranked priority in the Connecticut Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and has surfaced many times in focus groups and community meetings here in Newington.

Incorporation of Health and Wellness Focus – In recognition of such trends as increased longevity, childhood obesity, high stress levels, etc., work to raise the importance of this issue and the role that can be played by public parks and recreation; infuse such goals into existing programming and partnerships.

Challenges of Childhood and Adult Transition – Identify and accommodate the needs of those youth who don't fall into the more traditional modes of school activities and youth sports programming. This may include partnering with other youth and young adult serving agencies to enhance positive youth development opportunities.

Sense of Community and Community Pride – Newington has a tradition of community involvement and pride. Expand outreach efforts, neighborhood programming, and re-involvement of citizens in services and programs that benefit the community and the parks. Use neighborhood parks as base for programming and kids sports activities. Note, however, that some neighborhoods no longer have large numbers of kids.

Equity in Programming and Services – Newington has relied on camp sunrise as the primary activity throughout the year to address inclusion of special needs residents in the mainstream of the Department' programs and services. For small Departments such as Newington's the resources to hire a therapeutic recreation staff person to lead inclusion efforts is unlikely. However, current programming staff should be developing awareness, knowledge and abilities in the needs and requirements for inclusionary programs. There is also a need to expand the definition of special needs to recognize all residents with physical, mental, cultural, ethnic or class differences that need some special accommodation to participate.

The Department should seek to optimize inclusion of special needs individuals in town programming and service opportunities. Equity should not be reliant on the inclusion of those that contact the NRPD. Effort is needed to seek those in the community with special needs and determine if the Department can meet identified need. Be sure to provide adequate training to increase staff's sensitivity, comfort level and competency for customers with special needs. This may include people with disabilities, cultural, ethnic or economic differences. (See Appendix A)

## **Marketing Recommendations**

**26. The NRPD should develop a Comprehensive Marketing Plan to guide Programs and services to the community.**

## **Volunteers**

### **Findings:**

Newington is a community that has benefited much over the years from the social capital created by the public altruism of its residents. The Recreation and Parks Department have been and continues to be among those beneficiaries. Volunteers can be a valuable asset for a recreation and parks program. Numerous tasks that take considerable staff time can be handed to knowledgeable and properly trained volunteers for completion (the maintenance asset inventory is one example). In addition the volunteering efforts are yet another way to connect with the community and involve those who might not otherwise participate. Unfortunately, many volunteer efforts are poorly developed and too

often focus on jobs that staff doesn't want to do. Actions for a successful program include the following:

- Prepare job description and recruitment marketing tools that offer Volunteers meaningful and specified tasks to accomplish
- Determine the types of training required to enable volunteers to carry out the duties assigned.
- Create a log of volunteer duties and hours and obtain feedback from volunteers about the program.
- Once established, consider multiple volunteer corps including a youth program and a senior program
- Identify levels of effort that are of value to the department and establish an awards and recognition program based on meeting those volunteer criteria.
- Increase use of volunteers and civic groups during Extravaganza.

**Recommendation:**

**27. Develop a Recreation Volunteer Program**

**Capacity for Excellence in Community Service:**

**Processes, Policies, and Practices**

**Findings:**

Most of the NRPD processes are deeply engrained in the operations. Not because they are the most effective but because they have not been examined in light of changing conditions and needs. One process that has ceased to exist is the systematic collection and reporting of meaningful information concerning the operations of the Department. Both Recreation and Parks and Grounds Divisions should identify functions and unique sub-functions and develop a set of performance measures. Staff will need to develop methodology for ensuring they are tracking data that is needed. Initially tracking reports should be made weekly to be sure the data is being tracked properly. Later tracking can be monthly and eventually done on a quarterly basis, unless requested more frequently. Eventually, staff may choose to adjust the factors (increase or decrease the number of them) but try to keep them consistent for trend value. See Appendix B for more information.

**Recommendation**

**28. – Develop a reporting system that provides the management, with information needed to effectively manage the operations and the budgets.**

**Seeking Excellence**

Often small changes can have significant benefit to a system. More attention to some of the past practices can be of great value. One example is the NRPD rules and regulations, and policies. These should be kept up to date with federal, state and local statutes through an annual review. See Appendix C1 and C2 for suggestions on updates for the current rules document. Another example, involves establishing a program hierarchy to address core program needs and seek formal input from customers and non-customers to identify program and service needs in Newington. An additional

initiative is a revival of the annual contract – this document formalized the interaction between the Town and the Athletic Associations as it relates to facility use requirements and allocations. It spelled out the roles and duties for each athletic group to qualify for use of the fields. Similarly, clarification is needed regarding the practice of “sponsoring” sports groups as addressed in the NRPD By-Laws. This especially relates to conflicts with the School District’s community use of facility policies & fees. One new trend emanating from budget constraints and league partners is a small registration fee (\$5 to \$10 per registration) for capital maintenance to the various athletic facilities. See Appendix D. 1 for more information.

**Recommendation 29. Adopt policies and procedures to increase the level of excellence for the Town’s programs**

**Existing Best Practices**

Across the nation many jurisdictions have experienced issues similar to those facing Newington. In some cases the local uniqueness of the issue calls for a local solution. In other cases the solutions and adopted procedures are adequate and use of other standards is perfectly suitable. The athletic leagues can benefit from promoting compliance with Youth Athletic League Guidelines and Responsibilities. (See Appendix D.2 for an example). NRPD staff is introducing National Alliance of Youth Sports Administrators, (NAYSA) and other similar products to ensure the programs are provided and run in the spirit intended. League administrators, coaches, parents and officials should also seek certification through the available training. In addition to sports programs there exist national standards of Practice for Health and Wellness (see Appendix E), accessibility standards, and equity of service delivery

**Recommendation 30. Incorporate and Adapt Existing Professional Practices that are considered best practices in the country**

**New Capital Improvements**

Newington, like many communities in the United States did the vast majority of its park and recreation land and facility acquisition and development in the 1960’s 1970’s. These initiatives were capable of meeting the needs of the time and enjoyed a period of relatively low maintenance, as age deterioration has only recently become a major issue. Like any activity or resource the park system has a life cycle and it is now in need of rejuvenation. For the Town of Newington the investment in the park and recreation amenities is an investment in the economic viability of the Town. Nice parks, good schools and access to jobs will make Newington a selection of choice by those seeking a place to live that offers a high quality of life. These positive attributes will assist in retaining home value and keep the town a desirable place to live.

There are a number of capital projects some new and others featuring renewal that have reached a point of need. Among the new initiatives is the need for trails to encourage activity, a synthetic turf field to address athletic program needs, a dog park for dogs to run without a leash in a contained

space under the owner's watchful eye, and a master plan for Mill Pond Park to determine future park features and whether or not to formalize the current open field space at the park.

Initiatives that feature renewal of resources include the renovation or replacement of an aging Mortensen Community Center, re-development of a Mill Pond Park Pool and reconstruction or redesign of the Churchill Pool Complex. These projects are described in more detail below with recommendations at the end.

### **A walkable Community**

As part of increasing the health and wellness of the community; and offering alternative methods of accessing the parks, schools and other destinations - the Town should seek Transportation Enhancement Act Funding to plan for one or more major trail corridors and ways and means of developing or designating a complementary trails, streets and sidewalks plan for the Town. See Appendices E and F for more information.

### **Synthetic Turf area**

#### **Findings**

The primary issue surrounding the athletic fields in Newington is one of "playability." The soils in the area are primarily clays that have poor drainage, do not retain vegetative matter, nor allow adequate root growth due to the heavy use in adverse conditions. The only means of resolving these playability issues is to either undertake a complete field renovation or strategically place synthetic turf to accommodate the heaviest use.

A complete field renovation would require stripping the existing soils, installing effective drainage and replacement of the soils with a sand dominant mixture. This is expensive and would be required for a number of fields to make the action worthwhile. A more sound approach from an economic and playability standpoint is to invest in synthetic surfaces and provide lighting. The recommendations are as follows:

**Minimum Option** - Install synthetic turf surface for a regulation size rectangular field with an overlay for one 90-foot diamond field and an overlay for a 60-foot diamond with appropriate lighting. The synthetic surface would be at least 360 by 360 feet. Modular fencing would be needed for diamonds. Estimated cost of \$600,000 to 750,000

**Moderate Option** – Install synthetic turf surface for a rectangular area at least 360 by 360 feet and a separate synthetic turf for one 90 and two 60-foot diamond overlays with lighting. Estimated cost of \$1.2 to 1.4 million

**Maximum Option** – Install synthetic turf surface for four side-by-side rectangular fields, a four field wheel of little league/softball size fields and a 90-foot/adult softball sized field all with lights. Estimated cost of \$2.0 to \$3.0 depending on configuration.

#### **Comparison of Artificial and Natural Grass Fields:**

An artificial turf field costs approximately \$600,000:

- \* Plays like natural grass, with the same torque release
- \* Maintains its high quality throughout the year and does not deteriorate from heavy use
- \* Can be used 2000+ hours of use each year (compared with 300 hours for grass fields)
- \* Can be used year-round and in wet conditions
- \* Comes with a 10 year warranty with possible life estimates of 15 years and up
- \* Has minimal maintenance costs (maybe \$700 per year)
- \* Is safer than turf, with fewer injuries resulting from cutting and pivoting, as well as less leg fatigue and back and joint problems
- \* Is non-abrasive and does not cause “turf burn” injuries
- \* Is constructed with ample spacing between each blade of fiber, which allows cleated shoes to easily penetrate, rotate, and release

A similar-sized natural grass field with field preparation and irrigation, costs approximately \$150,000.

- \* After renovation, the field has to sit unused for at least a year.
- \* It then can be used for some practices and games, but ideally not more than 300-500 hours a year.
- \* It must be irrigated, fertilized, seeded, aerated twice a year, and covered with tarps in the winter.
- \* It still wears out rapidly, becomes clumpy or sparse, gets bare spots in high use areas.

See Appendix G for more information

#### **Mortensen Community Center**

Towns, like facilities and programs, have a lifecycle requiring constant attention to renew its image, services and amenities. Such actions are important to maintaining economic viability and value of assets. One facility that is central to the Town’s identity is the Mortensen Community Center. This facility has provided significant benefit to the residents over its many years since being developed. Of course prior to that time the center served as part of the school for the community. The consultants recommend that the Town of Newington begin the process of envisioning a new Community Center. The new center might feature major facilities such as a new gymnasium, a heated pool for aquatic exercise, a partnered fitness center, community meeting rooms, spaces for arts and cultural programs and areas for teens and active older adults. Consideration may also be given to a small auditorium (400 seats) for Community Theater, dance recitals and other performing arts programs. In 2007 dollars the cost of such a facility is estimated at \$200.00 per square foot. The typical Community center size with these features is from 50,000 to 70,000 sq. ft. The resultant cost would be \$10.0 to \$14.0 million. A center that replaces the existing size may cost between \$5.0 and \$7.0 million.

#### **Mill Pond and Churchill Pools**

At the age of 40 to 50 year old, swimming pools, even well built ones as these are, are more likely to experience major leaks or equipment failure. There are short-term patches but the cost is seldom worth the investment. Perhaps of greater significance is the low visitation to the pools by paying customers in recent years. The numbers below do not include an unaccounted usage by the summer playground program. The playground program has between 400 and 500 children using the pools for

an hour each weekday for 7 weeks. This usage would add another 12 to 15,000 swimmers but still leave the pools short of an average minimum of 20,000 visits per pool. As shown below the pools receive less than half of this average attendance. As elsewhere the availability of lap pools are not a draw for youth.

Swimming Pool Attendance

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
Churchill	8,559	8,037
Mill Pond	8,898	9,655

Over the next five years the consultants recommend demolishing Mill Pond Pool and replacing it with a suitably-sized and configured leisure/competitive pool. This is estimated to cost two million dollars. The pool at Churchill would eventually be closed and turned into a large group picnic area with enhanced amenities. Such action may cost \$400,000.

**Dog Park**

The hottest park and recreation facility in the nation, the dog park has exceeded the skatepark and even synthetic athletic fields as the facility with the highest demand. The dog parks generally offer a large enclosed space where the dogs and their owners can socialize. The dogs benefit from a space to run and the owners benefit from the social interaction. As more people living in apartments, condos and attached housing purchase pets these facilities are becoming increasingly popular. Fortunately the cost is generally low.

**Millbrook Master-plan**

Millbrook Park needs to be planned so the park's development can be scheduled. The recommendation for a synthetic field is predicated on the continued use of part of Millbrook Park as an open play area for soccer. Whether this use is continued or not the Town needs to define the use so that all parks in the queue for development, preservation or whatever use is determined.

**Recommendations**

- 31. Make Newington into a more walkable community**
- 32. Develop a Synthetic Turf area in one of the park areas.**
- 33. Renovate or Replace Mortensen Community Center**
- 34. Renovate or Replace Mill Pond Pool with a Pool/waterpark**
- 35. Redesign Churchill Park Pool Complex and Pond**
- 36. Dog Park**
- 37. Millbrook Master Plan and Development**

**Future Consideration****Create a Capital Development Foundation**

Newington may wish to consider creating a Capital Development Foundation to create funding over the next several years to offset the cost of the new facility. A planned giving program and possible naming rights for the facility could make funding the remainder of the development costs through general obligation or revenue bonds a viable alternative.



## **Action Plan**

### **Understanding the Action Plan**

The Action Plan contains the recommendations detailed in the document and lists the actions necessary to accomplish the recommendation. There are three defining categories for each set of recommendations and actions. They are Cost, Responsibility and Timing.

1. Cost - The Costs can be in terms of dollars expended or in terms of staff or volunteer time. No attempt is made to quantify the time. The dollars expended are predicated on estimates from similar projects. CEHP makes no warranty that the costs are precise. In the text of the document the consultants provide unit costs when available so a rough estimate can be made when the scale and scope of the project are known.
2. Responsibility – The responsible parties are indicated in this category. No attempt is made to identify specific individuals for the project. This is considered a function of the Town or Department management.
3. Timing – As a five-year plan the timing is indicated as being between 2008 and 2012. the years shown are calendar years and are more dependent on their relationship to each of the other recommendations rather than the specific number. For example, A recommendation that is scheduled to be done in 2009 could be done in 2010 or 2011, but it should still precede other projects scheduled for 2010 and later and follow those scheduled for 2008. Thus the plan may become a three or ten year plan depending on whether or not resources are available.

### **Perspective on Recommendations**

The Recommendations and Actions are presented as suggestion of ways to improve the overall park system. It is anticipated, even expected that the Town and the Department will make adjustments in the process of conducting business. The priority provided is designed to give a spatial context to each of the recommendations. The operational resources should be the measure regarding expectations for implementation. While it would be nice to do it all now, that isn't very practical. A steady progress will allow the Town to accomplish these recommendations, even the largest within the five-year time frame.

## Recommendations and Actions

### Administrative Recommendations

<b>Recommendation 1. Procure recreation management software</b> configured to provide the capability to manage and account for program and class registration, point of sale operations, financial accounting, membership and customer services, and time and attendance reporting. All services should be compatible with the Town IT, Web and financial systems. Estimated cost is \$15,000 for a web-based service. Annual cost will depend on public usage of the system, but may be as much as 5,000 annually.			
Actions	Costs	Responsibility	Timing
1.A. Obtain authorization to procure the software.	\$15,000	Superintendent	2007
1B. Develop a program statement detailing the uses and desired outcomes of using the software. Separately address the key capabilities desired: 1) Program Registration (online); 2) Point of Sale Operations; 3) Financial Tracking of all costs; 4) Membership and Customer Service; 5) Time and Attendance; 6) Facility Reservations. (Note the need for full training in software use).	Time	Staff	2007
1.C. Identify Town applications that require compatibility (financial and T & A)	Time	Staff	2007
1.D. Form the information into a Request for Proposals (RFP)	Time	Staff	2007
<b>Recommendation 2. Renew the TRIMS Grounds Management Software license which has lapsed</b>			
Actions	Costs	Responsibility	Timing
2.A. This recommendation has already been acted upon	\$300	NRPD	2007
2. B Implement program, train staff, utilize reports	Time	Vendor/NRPD	2007
<b>Recommendation 3. Change the now-vacant C-8 Secretary position to an Administrative Aide II (A-4) responsible to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation:</b>			
Actions	Costs	Responsibility	Timing
3.A. This recommendation has already been acted upon	Time	NRPD	2007
<b>Recommendation 4. Configure the automated accounting system for use with the Special Recreation Fund.</b>			
Actions	Costs	Responsibility	Timing
4.A. Prior to purchase of the Recreation Management software, determine its capacity to track associated program costs. If the system will not do so in a comprehensive manner or if it will not support Point of Sale, seek an independent solution like Quick Books.	Up to \$800.	NRPD & Finance	2007
<b>Recommendation 5. Create a logical Chart of Accounts</b>			
Actions	Costs	Responsibility	Timing
5.A. The new chart of accounts for the Special Revenue Fund needs to ensure that revenues collected are directly attributable to related expenses.	Time	NRPD and Finance	2007
5.B. Review the proposed Chart of Accounts and determine which Transaction Accounts and Project Accounts need to be deleted or expanded to make a logical and accountable financial matrix. The Project Accounts should be functions and the Transaction Accounts need to be expenditures or revenues associated with the functions. The transaction accounts may be determined in part by the recreation Management software program chosen	Time	NRPD and Finance	2007

<b>Recommendation 5. Create a logical Chart of Accounts (continued)</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
5.C. Functions can be sub-divided down to each program if desired but they should be created at levels that can be rolled up. e.g. aquatics > Classes, open swim, playgrounds > each of four playgrounds.	Time	NRPD and Finance	2007
5.D. Re-title the accounts as needed	Time	NRPD and Finance	2007
5.E. Apply to the budget for the winter season of the year.	Time	NRPD	2007
5.F. Retro-fill the data for the summer and fall so the year of 2008 is the test year and 2009 is the first full year.	Time	NRPD	2008
<b>Recommendation 6. Establish POS registers at each primary site including the MCC and the Pool concession areas.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
6.A. Determine the feasibility of providing appropriate connections to provide POS computers and cash handling systems at the swimming pools. At least for Mill Pond.	\$1250	NRPD	2007
6.B obtain the necessary hardware and train staff to use the system for accurate collection of aquatic program funds, and funds from events such as Extravaganza and raffles.	\$1250	NRPD	2008
<b>Recommendation 7. Adopt a fee and pricing policy</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
7.A. Review the draft fee and pricing policy provided in the plan document	Time	NPRD & Board	2007
7.B. Conduct a pricing study as outlined in the policy	Time	NPRD	2007
7.C. Make adjustments to the plan as desired	Time	NPRD & Board	2007
7.D. Adopt policy	Time	NPRD & Board	2007
7.E. Adopt policy for sponsorships.	Time	NPRD & Board	2008
<b>Recommendation 8. Implement a professional training and development plan and program.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A. <u>Recreation Programming and Service Training</u> that relates to the populations served by each staff person. Training with peers is available in the region and usually involves a two-day session - Registration fees generally include: education sessions, CEUs, lodging, meals. One training session per rec staff member per year for programming-	\$1200	Supt & Staff.	2008
8.B. B. <u>NRPA Revenue Management School</u> . The School runs for one week and offers three levels of training each year. Recommend all rec staff attend at least levels one and two over a six-year schedule.	\$1200	Supt & Staff.	2008
8.C. C. <u>NRPA Maintenance Management School</u> – The School runs for one week and offers three levels of training each year. Three top maintenance staff should attend at least levels one and two. Would mean two staff attending during years two and three of a four-year schedule.	\$2400	Supt & Staff.	2008
8.D. <u>NRPA National Congress</u> – Participation by three individuals annually. This would include the following individuals: Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent for Recreation or Assistant Superintendent for Parks (alternating years); and 1 board member (selected by the Board).	\$3600	Supt & Staff.	2008
8.E. <u>Specialized Trainings</u> – American Camping Association, Athletic Business Conference, New England Training Institute, others to be identified as appropriate.	\$1,000	Supt & Staff	2008

**Operational Recommendations – Parks and Grounds**

<b>Recommendation: 9. Reduce the Maintenance Workload.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
9 A. Systematically reduce or eliminate as much of the need for town maintenance at all Cul-de-sacs, medians and circles as possible utilizing the following actions	Varied, est. \$35,000 one –time cost	Town/State Residents & businesses	2008
1. Photo-Inventory assets; determine conditions and prioritize strategy.	Time	Parks and Grounds Division	2008
2. Transfer the parcels to private ownership	Time	Town	2008
3. Landscape appropriate parcels with low maintenance evergreens	See above	P&GD	2008
4. Remove grassed circles from Cul-de-sacs where possible	Time	P&GD	2008
5. Investigate both residential and commercial neighbors willingness to mow the areas using an “adopt a spot” program.	Time	Town	2008
9 B. Consider contracting high maintenance trim mowing, public facility sites, and remaining cul-de-sacs, medians and circles to private contractors.	\$80,000	NRPD	2008
9.C. Reconfigure the Service Levels for maintenance of the schools/parks to reduce maintenance in selected schools/parks or portions of schools/parks	Time	NRPD Schools	2008
9 D. Redefine and Renegotiate the primary and supplemental maintenance of the schools to either increase resources or balance any reductions in service between the parks and the schools.	Time	NRPD Schools	2008
9. E. Consider an Adopt-a-Park or Adopt-a-Field Program that allows a sports association to have priority use of a field in their priority season in return for guided maintenance of that field or park.	Time	NRPD	2008
<b>Recommendation 10. Increase Resources to meet the remaining workload requirements. Consider any or all of the following actions:</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
10. A Hire part-time positions to work from 3/15 to 10/15 each year		Town	2008
10. B Add Additional Seasonal 120 day positions for 3/15 to 6/15 and 8/15 to 11/15 as well as for the 5/15 to 8/15 normal time period.		Town	2008
10. C Increase full-time staffing by at least three maintenance employees according to the needs as presented by the Department.		Town	2008
10. D. Review the Schools/Park department agreement to clarify those actions that will be considered supplemental to grounds maintenance of the schools and the conditions under which snow and ice removal will occur. Determine if a different distribution of funding is warranted.		Town	2009

<b>Recommendation 11. Transfer the building maintenance responsibility For Historic Properties to the Facilities Management Unit of the Town.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
11.A. This recommendation has already been acted upon	\$+/- 15,000 transfer	Town	2007
<b>Recommendation 12. Existing Pool Recommendations – Churchill</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
12.A. Continue to operate both Churchill and Mill Pond until Mill Pond is renovated, repair deck surfaces	Current budget	NPRD	2008-12
12.B. Provide funding for pool deck repair	\$5,000	NPRD	2008
<b>Recommendation 13. Existing Pool Recommendations – Mill Pond</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
13.A. Continue to operate Mill Pond until Mill Pond is renovated, repair deck surfaces	Current budget	NPRD	2008-12
13.B. Complete an aesthetic & structural repairs of the Mill Pond Bathhouse, Replace ceiling tiles in men's room.	\$15,000	NPRD	2009
<b>Recommendation 14. Discuss indoor pool needs for the Town and the High School to determine any future opportunities for an accessible shared indoor facility.</b>			
<b>Recommendation 15. Systematically restore the neighborhood parks. The minimum estimated funds needed for a landscape design of each park and to bring the neighborhood parks up to standard is \$185,000.00 distributed accordingly:</b>			
	Beechwood	\$35,000	
	Beacon Park	\$35,000	
	Candlewyck Park	\$25,000	
	Eagle Lantern	\$25,000	
	Little Brook	\$15,000	
	Mary Welles	\$15,000	
	Seymour Park	\$15,000	
	Starr Park	\$20,000	
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
15.A. Re-grade and level open play areas	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.B. Repair or remove backstops	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.C. Re-locate or re-grade the playground areas	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.D. Develop turf management program for open play areas	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.E. Repair or replace the multi-purpose courts	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.F. Install new playground apparatus, picnic tables, rubber safety mats, trash containers and benches	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.G. Repair or remove fencing	See above	NPRD	2008-12
15.H. Pond clean up	See above	NPRD	2008-12
<b>Recommendation 16. Provide adequate funding and resources to maintain the neighborhood parks at a sustainable level.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
16.A. Request a maintenance plan and cost for each neighborhood park as part of the landscape design for each site.	\$5,000 per developed acre, annually	NPRD	2009

<b>Recommendation 17. Clem Lemire Park – Improve parking and traffic flow</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
17.A. Contract specific design for alterations to the park. This may be done in conjunction with installation of a synthetic field, which may require reconfiguration of the use area in the park.	Variable/ Seek volunteer	NPRD	2009
17.B Provide additional landscaping for parking area near the skate facilities	\$10,000	NPRD	2009
17.C Include benches for skate facility spectators	\$1000	NPRD	2009
17.D Consider methods to ensure traffic observes 15 mph speed limit, Parking and calming devices	\$30,000	NPRD	2009
<b>Recommendation 18. Provide adequate capital funding for unanticipated expenditures.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
18.A. Create Budget Cost categories to identify capital repairs need to properly maintain facilities. The categories are as follows:	See Below	NPRD	Annual
1. Annual operations and capital needs including specific breakdowns, vandalism, and emergency corrective repairs	\$50,000	Town Council	Annual
2. Short-Term (one to three year) projects that have priority operational and capital impacts due to safety, code infractions or citations	Current List \$76,750	Town Council	Annual
<b>Recommendation 19 – Complete an inventory of all physical assets for the NPRD.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
19.A. Have staff systematically record all assets over time. Description should include details of any replacement items such as manufacturer, and model number as well as name and type of item.	Time	NPRD	2009
19.B. Determine the maintenance actions and the frequency of maintenance for each asset.	Time	NPRD	2009
19.C. Distinguish between preventive maintenance and cyclical maintenance actions	Time	NPRD	2009
19.D. If available seek input from drafting classes or mechanical or agricultural systems training centers (Community Colleges etc.)	Time	NPRD	2009
19.E Inventory consumable supplies i.e. signs	Time	NPRD	2009
<b>Recommendation 20 – Revise the current cyclical maintenance schedule for the NPRD Grounds.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
20.A. Identify cyclical maintenance items in the inventory (Playground sections needing replacement, tennis court, net poles, court surfaces, windscreens line painting, athletic field fences, dugouts, goals, sod, etc. )	Time	NPRD	Much of this is done
20.B. Develop a schedule and budget for life cycle and replacement as well as estimates of inflated cost. Use a 3 to 4 % (Compound Annual Growth Rate) CAGR unless trends indicate otherwise.	\$50,000/yr.	NPRD	2008
20.C. Annually track the replacement costs of the cyclical assets as well as any repair costs, frequency of repair and downtime.	Time	NPRD	2008

<b>Recommendation 21. Compartmentalize the various maintenance functions and track the time, workload and cost of performing each over the course of the year.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
21.A. Logical breaks include:	Time	NPRD	2009
1. Trim mowing/public facilities,	Time	NPRD	2009
2. School grounds,	Time	NPRD	2009
3. Parks,	Time	NPRD	2009
4. Cemeteries	Time	NPRD	2009
5. Other to include medians, cul-de-sacs, circles, special events, and vandalism.	Time	NPRD	2009
21.B. Create a code for each category and include that code on all work orders.	Time	NPRD	2009
<b>Recommendation C. 22 – Clarify or develop the maintenance standards for categories of maintenance for use in training and evaluation of performance.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
22.A. Formalize the standards currently used for trim mowing, park, and athletic fields..	Time	NPRD	2010
22.B. Utilize the maintenance standards available from NRPA to establish standards for courts and other areas that don't currently have standards.	Time	NPRD	2010
22.C. State the standards or provide pictures that clearly show what level of quality is expected for the adopted standards.	Time	NPRD	2010
22.D. Determine the cost of providing services at the desired standards	Time	NPRD	2010
22.E. Submit the standards for adoption by the Parks & Recreation Board	Time	NPRD	2010

## Programs and Service Recommendations

<b>Recommendation 23. Shift the Programming Orientation and Approach from marketing alone to market outcomes:</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
23.A. Incorporate the marketing orientation, but place a primary focus upon outcomes that are important for individuals and the community	Time	NPRD	2008
23.B. Develop program pricing practice based upon level of positive outcomes for the general public and the community	Time	NPRD	2008
23.C. Focus on programs and services that increase sense of community; healthy and active residents; and reinforcement of lifetime sports community designation.	Time	NPRD	2008
23.D. Conduct 3 year operational plan with 1 <sup>st</sup> year analysis of current budget, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year = budget year, and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year anticipated initiatives and revised goals. Prepare program plans without specific scheduling and staffing that are completed one year in advance rather than seasonally	Time	NPRD	2008
23.E. Program Operations Manuals – consistent contents with addendums by program	Time	NPRD	2008
23. F During the fall, winter and spring seasons assign duties and responsibilities based upon commonality of population groups, outcomes, or program area	Time	NPRD	2008
23.G. During the summer season continue to divide the labor among programming staff makes as is currently practiced	Time	NPRD	2008

<b>Recommendation 24. Diversify the Program Areas and Forms</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
24.A. Reduce reliance on classes and teams as program base to attract individuals that are interested in less structured activities	Time	NPRD	2009
24.B. To support sense of community, unstructured program forms such as special events, clubs and affinity groups, and drop-ins	Time	NPRD	2009
24.C. Mobile recreation or outreach programming could encourage greater neighborhood synergy as well as reaching new participants. e.g. movie nights, carnival (with games, neighborhood parade, book mobile) and similar.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.D. Design classes and other programs to encourage active, independent engagement in leisure time activities, e.g., walking programs like 10,000 steps.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.E. Use “getting started” clinics to help people pursue a new interest followed by resources that will enable them to continue that interest.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.F. Become less dependent on groups sports. Broaden the opportunities for individual sports	Time	NPRD	2009
24.G. Move the youth basketball travel program to a non-profit organization.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.H. Expand to incorporate the newer lifetime sports such as yoga, geo-caching and archery	Time	NPRD	2009
24.I. Review the fee structure for traditional lifetime sports being currently offered by the department such as tennis and golf and reconfigure ways to make those “getting started” opportunities more accessible to more residents.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.J Orient instructors towards incorporating the important outcomes into their instruction or coaching.	Time	NPRD	2009
24.K. Program Environmental Education – use of Eddy Farm & Young Farm properties and greenways. A great volunteer program!	Time	NPRD	2009
<b>Recommendation 25. Diversify Target Population Groups</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
25. A. Teens should be offered semi-structured, less traditional physical activities and options and even self-planned activities.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.B. NPRD should increase collaboration with youth services and the library for joint youth programming endeavors	Time	NPRD	2010
25.C. The department should systematically survey the town youth about specific interests and desired outcomes to determine what its roles and responsibilities should be in relation to other providers.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.D. The recent retiree’s should be offered specific clinics, getaway opportunities, or new skill set development activities.	Time	NPRD	2010
25. E. To reach the “boomer” population will require different programming, marketing and location that distinguishes this generation from the current senior population’s needs.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.F. Programming for senior adults will continue at the center and this group should be offered programs and activities both inside and outside of the Center to keep them stay connected with the greater community.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.G. The department should systematically survey the town	Time	NPRD	2010



retirees about specific interests and desired outcomes to determine what its roles and responsibilities should be in relation to other providers.			
25.H. Programs and activities that are available to special populations need to be given more emphasis in the department's efforts.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.I. The NRPD or the Town should convene an ad hoc group of professionals from the school department, senior and disability center, and other service providers to create a strategy as to how to identify special needs individuals and make contact with them as the initial step for seeking greater involvement and participation in available services.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.J The department should facilitate the development of a strategy for increasing services and inclusion of special populations into the Department's planning and service delivery.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.K. The department should develop guidelines for offering inclusion opportunities to special needs residents of the town.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.L. Adopt an inclusion policy relative to facility, program and service access.	Time	NPRD	2010
25.M. Provide NRPD staff with adequate training to facilitate and provide services and/or activities as needed.	Time	NPRD	2010
<b>Recommendation 26 – Develop a Comprehensive Marketing Plan for the NRPD.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
26.A. The following marketing functions and activities need to be added to the programming component	Time	NPRD	2011
1. Target Marketing	Time	NPRD	2011
a. Create target market segments for the community using the demographic and lifestyle profiles included within this study	Time	NPRD	2011
b. Develop strategies for programs and services based upon individual, group, and community as a whole	Time	NPRD	2011
c. Incorporate the usage patterns and demographic information from the newly automated registration system to support these efforts	Time	NPRD	2011
2. Marketing Mix Variables	Time	NPRD	2011
a. Develop a program matrix that incorporates major community outcomes as well as variables such as time, price, etc.	Time	NPRD	2011
b. The automated registration system will provide program life cycle information upon which marketing strategies can be developed	Time	NPRD	2011
3. Marketing Strategies	Time	NPRD	2011
a. Incorporate program life cycle information into the development of one of the following marketing strategies: market penetration, market development, market extension, diversification	Time	NPRD	2011

26.B. The following marketing functions and activities need to be incorporated into the overall approach used by the department	Time	NPRD	2011
1. Maintain customer data bases	Time	NPRD	2011
2. Develop a market position consistent with mission and important outcomes	Time	NPRD	2011
3. Evaluate cycle of service, all contacts, residents have with the department from initial phone call to end of program	Time	NPRD	2011
4. Access and Opportunities for Open Space	Time	NPRD	2011
5. Incorporation of Health and Wellness Focus	Time	NPRD	2011
6. Sense of Community and Community Pride	Time	NPRD	2011
7. Equity in Programming and Services	Time	NPRD	2011
<b>Recommendation 27. Develop Recreation Volunteer Program</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
27.A. Prepare job description and recruitment marketing tools that offer Volunteers meaningful and specified tasks to accomplish	Time	NPRD	2008
27.B. Determine the types of training required to enable volunteers to carry out the duties assigned.	Time	NPRD	2008
27.C. Create a log of volunteer duties and hours and obtain feedback from volunteers about the program.	Time	NPRD	2008
27.D. Once established consider multiple volunteer corps including a youth program and a senior program	Time	NPRD	2008
27.E. Identify levels of effort that are of value to the department and establish an awards and recognition program based on meeting those volunteer criteria.	Time	NPRD	2008
27.F. Increase use of volunteers and civic groups during Extravaganza.	Time	NPRD	2008
<b>Recommendation 28. – Develop a reporting system that provides the management, with information needed to effectively manage the operations and the budgets.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
28.A. Both Recreation and Parks and Grounds Divisions should identify functions and unique sub-functions and develop a set of performance measures,	Time	NPRD	2008
28.B. Staff will need to develop methodology for ensuring they are tracking data that is needed	Time	NPRD	2008
28.C. Initially tracking reports should be made weekly to be sure the data is being tracked properly. Later tracking can be monthly and eventually done on a quarterly basis, unless requested more frequently.	Time	NPRD	2008
28.D. Eventually, staff may choose to adjust the factors (increase or decrease the number of them) but try to keep them consistent for trend value. S	Time	NPRD	2008

<b>Recommendation 29. Adopt policies and procedures to increase the level of excellence for the Town's programs</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
29.A. Establish a program hierarchy that addresses core program needs and seeks formal input from customers and non-customers to identify program and service needs in Newington.	Time	NPRD	2008
29.B. Formalize the interaction between the Town and the Athletic Associations as it relates to facility use requirements and allocations. The NPRD should sign an annual contract with each athletic group spelling out their roles and duties to qualify for league use of the fields.	Time	NPRD	2008
29.C. The Town should consider a small registration fee for capital maintenance to the various athletic facilities.	Time	NPRD	2008
29.D. Clarification is needed regarding the practice of "sponsoring" sports groups as addressed in the NPRD By-Laws. This especially relates to conflicts with the School District's community use of facility policies & fees	Time	NPRD	2008
<b>Recommendation 30. Incorporate and Adapt Existing Professional Practices that are considered best practices in the country</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
30.A. Promote compliance with Youth Athletic League Guidelines and Responsibilities. See Appendix C for an example 1. NPRD staff should seek NAYSA (National Alliance of Youth sports Administrators) certification. 2. League Administrators, coaches, Parents and Officials should also seek certification through the available training.	Time	NPRD	2008
30.B. Standards of Practice for Health and Wellness (see Appendix F)	Time	NPRD	2009
30.C. Accessibility Standards and Equity of Service Delivery (See Appendix A)	Time	NPRD	2009

## Capital Project Recommendations

<b>Recommendation 31. Make Newington into a more "walkable" community</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
31.A. Identify conceptual routes for trails in Newington and categorize the types of trails/paths/roadways needed to develop connectors.	Time	NGA	2007-08
31.B. Continue to support effort of Newington Greenways Alliance (NGA) to Seek grants and donations to fund a planning process to prepare for State/Federal grant opportunities	Time	NGA	Ongoing
31.C. Draft a trails plan See Appendix	\$15,000	NPRD/NGA	2009
31.D. Work with Central CT State University to develop resource guides/maps of walking paths, bikeways	Time	NPRD/NGA	2009
31.E. Town should seek Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) funds to implement plan.	Time	Town	2010-12

<b>Recommendation 32. Develop a Synthetic Turf area in one of the park areas.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
32.A. Conduct research on Artificial Turf products includes Sending Supt. to Athletic business Conference	\$1000 travel	NPRD	2007-08
32.B. Establish a Building Committee (BC) 1. Select feasible locations 2. Define usage and operations requirements 3. Identify funding	Time	Town and BC	2007-08
32.C. Develop RFP and funding strategy	\$500,000 to \$700,000	Town	2008-09
<b>Recommendation 33. Renovate or Replace Mortensen Community Center</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
33.A. Conduct research on Community Center Complex options includes Sending Supt. to Athletic business Conference	\$1000 travel	NPRD	2007-08
33.B. Establish a Building committee	Time	Town and BC	2007-08
33.C. Determine the facility criteria for the Town, users and market. e. g. Town criteria may include capital budget, expected cost recovery, operational considerations such as hours, environmental standards etc.	Time	BC	2008
33.D. Prepare a program statement detailing how the facility will be programmed, staffed and how it will meet the Town's criteria, the user's needs and the niche the facility will serve in the market (If cost recovery is a major criteria, the facility should be subject to a feasibility study).	Time	BC	2008
33.E. Develop a RFP and a funding strategy	\$10.0M	Town	2010
<b>Recommendation 34. Renovate or Replace Mill Pond Pool with a Pool/waterpark</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
34.A. Conduct research on Aquatics Complex options includes Sending Supt. to Athletic Business Conference or World Water Parks Conference	\$1000 travel	NPRD	2009
34.B. Establish a Building Committee (BC)	Time	Town and BC	2009
34.C. Determine the facility criteria for the Town, users and market. e. g. Town criteria may include capital budget, expected cost recovery, operational considerations such as hours, environmental standards etc.	Time	BC	2010
34.D. Prepare a program statement detailing how the facility will be programmed, staffed and how it will meet the Town's criteria, the user's needs and the niche the facility will serve in the market (If cost recovery is a major criteria, the facility should be subject to a feasibility study).	Time	BC	2010
34.E. Contract with Waterpark architect and engineer to design the rebuild of Mill Pond Park Pool as a Waterpark/competition pool.	\$30,000	Town	2011
34.E. Develop a RFP and a funding strategy	\$2.0M	Town	2012

<b>Recommendation 35. Redesign Churchill Park Pool Complex and Pond</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
35.A. Establish a Building Committee (BC)			2009
35.B. Determine the facility criteria for the Town, users and market. e. g. Town criteria may include capital budget, expected cost recovery, operational considerations such as hours, environmental standards etc.	Time	BC	2009
35.C. Prepare a program statement detailing how the facility will be programmed, staffed and how it will meet the Town's criteria, the user's needs and the niche the facility will serve in the market (If cost recovery is a major criteria, the facility should be subject to a feasibility study).	Time	BC	2009
35.D. Churchill Park Pond Dredging 1. Prepare a program statement detailing how the facility will be used and what actions need to occur in the pond project. 2. Obtain engineering estimates on the cost of dredging, sediment removal and transport.	\$15,000 for engineering	NPRD	2010
35.E. Develop a RFP and a funding strategy	\$400,000	Town	2011
<b>Recommendation 36. Dog Park</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
36.A. Research Dog Park development	\$500 travel	NPRD	2007-08
36.B. Form Dog Park Interest Group and Building Committee	Time	BC	2007-08
35.C. Determine the facility criteria for the Town, users and market. e. g. Town criteria may include capital budget, and operational considerations such as hours, environmental standards etc.	Time	BC	2008
35.D. Prepare a program statement detailing how the facility will be programmed, staffed and how it will meet the Town's criteria, the user's needs.	Time	BC	2008
36.E. Develop a RFP and a funding strategy	\$20,000	Town	2008
<b>Recommendation 37. Millbrook Master-plan and Development</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
37.A. Contract with a Park Master Planner 1. Site Analysis, 2. Public meetings on possible uses 3. Concept designs and alternatives 4. Public Meeting on concepts 5. Final plan and program statement for adoption	\$10,000	NRPD	2011
37.B. Develop a RFP and a funding strategy	\$250,000	Town	2012

## Priority Scheduling

The following pages contain a series of priority scheduling charts. The schedules demonstrate the relative value of each recommendation, but do not constrain the action that may be taken on any one of the recommendations. As frequently happens the opportunities to move forward on a given project do not always follow the priorities. Note that some of the recommendations that have been enacted are not included in these schedules.

## **NOTES**